



adibasi

A Journal of Anthropological Research



Vol. XXIII, No. 2

JULY, 1983

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Instruction to Authors

Adibasi is a quarterly periodical published by the Tribal and Harijan Research-cum-Training Institute, Bhubaneswar, Orissa every year in April, July, October and January. It contains papers and findings on Social Sciences emphasising tribal problems of Orissa.

Adibasi invites contribution from persons interested in Anthropology, Demography, Economics, Human Geography, Museology, Planning and Sociology with particular reference to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Manuscripts sent for publication must be typewritten in double space on one side of the paper. Each contributor will be given twenty-five off prints.

New contributors are required to send a note on their academic qualifications, research experience and postal addresses along with their manuscripts.

All correspondence should be addressed to Dr. N. Patnaik, Director, Tribal and Harijan Research-cum-Training Institute, Bhubaneswar, Orissa.

Annual subscription of the journal :

Rs. 16-00	..	Inland
Rs. 20-00	..	Foreign

(This is subject to revision)

Back issues are available for sale. Adibasi is also supplied on exchange basis.

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THE GONDS

—D. Hajra

Geographical location and spread of the Gond.

The Gonds are the most important major tribal group of Central India. Taking into consideration all the sections and sub-sections that are labelled as and put under the generic name 'Gond', this great tribe constitutes numerically the second most dominant tribal group of the country, standing next to the Bhil group (including all its sections). The Gonds numbered, as per the 1971 Census, a little over five millions distributed over a wide tract of land that forms more or less a contiguous area and are found spread over mainly in the States of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Orissa. The area of their distribution may broadly be said to lie between the Vindhyan mountains in the north and the Godavari gorges in the south and between some easternmost districts of Maharashtra in the west and a few westernmost districts of Orissa in the east. Due to the long-standing association with this great tribe, the vast area in Central India had once earned in mediaeval times the appellation "Gondwana" ascribed to the land of their habitation. Their maximum concentration lies in Madhya Pradesh where they are found distributed more or less throughout the State with the exception of the extreme northern and western parts. But their main concentration lies in the Satpura plateau in the north and the Chhattisgarh plains and the Bastar district in the south.

In Maharashtra they are found spread in some of the easternmost districts mainly in Chandrapur, Yeshwant and Nanded that are adjoined to Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh. The southern extension of the tribe is mainly restricted in some of the northernmost districts of Andhra, their

main strongholds being Adilabad and Khammam districts. Considerable number of Gonds are also found in Orissa, the main concentration being in Koraput district adjoining to Madhya Pradesh.

Population and population density

The total population of the Gonds including the Koya and other groups which are classified under this tribe was 5,154,538 according to the Census of 1971 of which Madhya Pradesh alone contained 73.13 per cent of the total Gond population. The distribution of the Gonds in different States according to 1971 census is shown below:

States	Gond population	Percentage
Andhra Pradesh ..	442,715	8.59
Madhya Pradesh ..	3,769,547	73.13
Maharashtra ..	331,841	6.44
Orissa ..	559,340	10.85
Other States ..	51,093	0.99
	5,154,538	100.00

Since the separate districtwise figures for the Gonds in different States are not available in 1971 Census, it is difficult to show the density of this tribe separately for each district where they are found in great number, of course the general density of population with percentages of the tribals in general in the important districts of Central India (excluding south India) where

the Gonds occur as predominant tribes are shown in the following table based on 1971 Census:

States/Districts		Total tribal population	Tribal per cent to total population	General population density per Sq. Km.
(1)		(2)	(3)	(4)
Andhra	..	1,657,657	3.81	157
Madhya Pradesh	..	8,387,403	20.14	94
Maharashtra	..	2,954,249	5.86	164
Orissa	..	5,071,937	23.11	141
Balaghat	}	109,993	11.52	106
Bastar		1,033,950	65.20	39
Betul		224,538	30.50	73
Chhindwara		348,026	35.17	63
Damoh		N. A.	N. A.	79
Durg	}	251,082	10.20	225
Hosangabad		57,761	7.17	80
Mandla		528,865	60.54	66
Seoni		250,577	37.49	76
Surguja		74,894	55.93	59
Chandrapur	Maharashtra	281,402	14.18	64
Yotmal	}	N. A.	N. A.	102
Koraput—Orissa		N. A.	N. A.	76

Transformation and problems of identification of the Gonds.

The Gonds are a Dravidian speaking tribe having a language of their own called Gondi which has been classified under the central Dravidian group of languages. Linguistically Gondi is said to be related more to Tamil and Kanarese than to other important languages of south India. But it is evident that Gondi as spoken in southern part of the Gond territory, particularly in south Bastar in Madhya Pradesh, Chandrapur in Maharashtra and south Koraput in Orissa with its extension in Andhra, has been much moulded due to the influence of local Telugu. The Gonds, whenever they have retained their own language

and maintained their cultural identity, use the term 'Koltor' or 'Kol' as self-designatory term. On the other hand, the term 'Gond' has been in use by the outsiders to designate all the Koltor group of people. The term 'Gond' might have its origin from the name 'Khond', another central Dravidian speaking tribe of Orissa which is having some linguistic and cultural affinities with the Gond. The different sections of the Koltor (i.e., Gond) of Bastar are though designated by various terms like Maria, Muria, Dorla, etc. the name Gond still remains unfamiliar to them with the exception of the Hinduised Gond immigrants from Chhattisgarh in north Bastar.

Since a large variety of groups has been classified as the Gonds of various categories, it is rather a difficult problem to establish the true Koiror identity for a group included under a Gond category, and at the same time to isolate a non-Koiror group (if so included) from the fold of the Gond. For obvious reasons, it is rather difficult for so large a group like the Gond spreading over so vast an area to have a homogeneous population by retaining although a uniform racial, cultural and linguistic affinity sharing it in common among all of them. Under such circumstances while dealing with the problem of identifying a group under the Gond fold, some important issues emerge out. We know the great Gond group in its entirety (including various sub-groups) is but composed of a large number of endogamous groups under various labels and quite a few of them are undoubtedly of non-Gond origin. Leaving aside all the groups of doubtful Gond origin, inter-marriage is not practised even among the various sub-groups of the Gond as a rule.

On account of their numerical dominance and their significant role once played in cultural and political domain, the Gond attained, at one time, a supreme position and enjoyed privileged status among the other central Indian tribes of minor importance. Also, some sort of symbiotic relationship developed between the Gonds and some other tribal groups, whereby the Gonds assumed the role of patrons and the other as beneficiaries. As such, there were concerted attempts made on the part of some of these tribes to adopt the way of life of the Gond as a model in order to get themselves associated with this great tribe. Thus, some tribes might have succeeded in getting themselves incorporated in the Gond-fold. Also, the question of some admixture of blood between the Gonds and other ethnic groups cannot be ruled out.

On the other hand some significant changes are under process within the very Gond society itself as observed among the various sub-groups. The Gonds, in general, present some features peculiar to the group as a whole, and various sub-groups of the Gond are accordingly found in sharing such features in common among them. They have their common tongue 'Gondi'; the self-designatory common generic term is 'Koiror'. The presence of phratry system for regulation of marriage among them is another common feature of the tribe by which a group is divided into a few exogamous division, each incorporating a

number of clans within it. Each of such phratries, unusual cases, is referred to in terms of the number of gods called *pen dève*, etc., which are supposed to be worshipped by the concerned members. Each clan under a phratry has, in its turn, a set of clan-gods, the number of which corresponds to that by which the phratry in question is designated. The Gond also practice cross-cousin marriages which are found to be of preferred types.

Though the people generally tend to adhere to their normative rules, especially to those which concern the major events of life, it is however found that their traditional way of life has been under the constant process of some change. It is more discernible in an area where the impact of outside influences is apparently significant, and also in case of those who happen to live apart from the main stock. In such cases it may be found that some new concepts and ideas are being accepted in the life-way, replacing the old ones which are effected through the influence of the prevailing situation of the immediate environs. The reform activities or some induced factors like introduction and application of some State Laws of obligatory nature also play a significant role in that direction. Another aspect of change, which is worth noting among the Gonds, concerns about their traditional language i. e. Gondi. The language of a group is subject to any type of change on an easy process when compared to the social customs and religious practices of the group, because in such cases orthodoxy is maintained more rigidly. The traditional language of the Gonds, who are distributed scatteredly over a vast area has also undergone changes in some parts of their territory, either in way of its profound transformation or by substitution of other local tongue, depending on the nature of their habitat and exertion of outside influence. Thus it is found, among the Gonds of the northern and north-eastern extremities of Madhya Pradesh adopting the local form of Hindi in total replacement of their own tongue; likewise Chhattisgarhi has been adopted by the Gonds living in the Chhattisgarh plains and Marathi in some parts of the Nagpur plains. Even in Bastar where the Gonds form the most dominant tribal group, Halbi, one of the major languages of Bastar, has been accepted by some Gonds as their mother-tongue. The influence of Telugu has been found among all the southern sections of the Gonds as already stated.

The total number of Gonds (including the Koya and all the Gond categories) was found to be 5,154,536 in 1971, whereas only 1,900,161 persons returned in the same census as Gond speakers (including 1,688,284 Gond and 211,877 Koya). That is, about 36.88 per cent of the Gonds have retained their own language as mother-tongue and the rest, i.e., about 63.14 have adopted some other languages by replacing their traditional one, if we except that Gond being spoken exclusively by the members of their own group.

While undertaking a field investigation among the Gonds of Jabalpur region during 1977 it was found that they have forgotten their own tongue, i.e., Gond, and have adopted the local form of Hindi. But they are aware of their forgotten tongue i.e., Gond, which they refer to as 'Parsi-boli', which is still being in use by their fellow-members living in the neighbouring district of Mandla and elsewhere. They are also found to have assumed certain alien features which are characteristics of the Hindus. They of this region are referred to as 'Kisan'. Some of them claim themselves to be Thakur or Raj-Gond; the male members put on sacred thread which they take usually at the time of marriage. They abstain from eating beef and pork and remain dissociated even from rearing chicken in their houses. They resent very much at drinking liquor within the village. The marriages with some near kins like father's sister's daughter or mother's brother's daughter have now become obsolete. Besides, their own gods and goddesses the people worship some Hindu deities. A number of Hindu festivals are being observed in right earnest. Through their traditional tribal priest Baiga (Doshi) is called for performing some of their socio-religious rites, they often take the services of Brahmins for ritual purposes on the occasion of some of the important social functions like birth, marriage and death. The ritual services of a barber (Khobas) and wisherman (Boretha) are also sought on some of these occasions. The concept of ritual pollution is found to be well developed among the people and they do not accept water or cooked food from the members of some of the ethnic groups which they consider to be inferior to them in social hierarchy. All these indicate a process of transformation which is at work among some sections of the Gonds, and as a result, they have assumed a number of features that are the characteristics of some castes within the social system of the Hindus. In this con-

nection Grigson's comments while dealing with the Bastar tribes, are worth-noting. He says, "the difficulty is accentuated by the tendency, familiar throughout India, of local groups of primitive races which are gradually being Hinduized to regard themselves and to be accepted by their Hindu neighbours as separate Hindu castes under new names. So arise such names as Raj-Gond, Raj-Korku, Raja-Muria, Nayak-Gond.....".

Historical background

On account of the Dravidian characteristics present in Gond, the traditional language of the tribe, it has been asserted by many about the probable migration of the Gonds towards the north from the Godavari valley. There are various myths, folk-songs and traditions found current particularly in Bastar and elsewhere which are indicative of such inference. Russell states, "there is no reason however to doubt that the Gonds came from the south through Chanda and Bastar".

The political scene of central India beginning from sometime during the fifteenth century was eventful and significant in matters of rise and advent of Gond's supremacy; they continued to enjoy the status of a ruling race upto the middle of eighteenth century. A number of Gond kingdoms came into existence during this period, the important ones being Garha-Mandla (Garha remained near Jabalpur), Khorla (in Betul), Deogarh (in Chhindwara) and Chanda (now Chandrapur). All of them are now in Madhya Pradesh except the last one which is in Maharashtra. Towards the middle of eighteenth century all the Gond kingdoms collapsed one after another on account of successive onslaughts of Muslim and Maratha armies and lack of unity and want of proper leadership among the rulers.

During the time when the Gond rose to political power and Gond Kingdoms flourished, some important changes were also brought in the social field as marked in Gond society. Consequently an aristocratic class among the Gond emerged out. Besides the rulers, there were Gond feudal chiefs and zamindars. An appellation 'Raj' was added to this class of members as a mark of differentiation from the ordinary class of Gonds. As a result this people refrained from marrying freely in to the ordinary class of Gond, restricted only to hypergamy type of marriages in some cases. But in later period such term as Raj-Gond was being

applied in a symbolic way on various counts, mainly as an epithet used for an acculturated group under Hindu influence.

Educational institutions and literacy position.

The spread of education among the Gonds in Central India, particularly in Madhya Pradesh where maximum population of the Gond (73.13 per cent) is found, is far below the standard. At present, facilities are provided for primary education to tribal children in almost all big villages, and in usual cases the children need not go beyond 2 or 3 Kilometers for attending the schools from their villages. On the other hand, the scope and facilities for attain of any higher study are too meagre to meet the general demand, if there is any.

The literacy standard among the Gonds, taking together all the groups and sub-groups including the Koye, as available from the 1971 census, is shown in the following table—

States	Total Gond	Total number of literates	Literacy Percentage
Andhra Pradesh	442,751	16,417	3.71
Biher ..	48,869	6,498	13.30
Gujarat ..	402	87	21.64
Madhya Pradesh	3,769,547	324,444	8.61
Maharashtra ..	331,641	38,821	11.70
Mysore ..	1,776	169	9.52
Orissa ..	659,340	68,064	12.17
West Bengal ..	46	7	15.22
Total ..	5,154,536	454,497	8.82

Of all the major States like Andhra, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Orissa where the Gonds form the most important tribal group, literacy percentage is highest in Orissa, i.e., 12.17 per cent and next comes Maharashtra with 11.70 per cent. The lowest literacy percentage of 3.71 is found among the Gonds of Andhra Pradesh.

Some observations on education may be made on the Doria of Injiam, a village in Kanta Tahsil in the district of Bastar, from the empirical data collected during the intensive field work carried out during 1958—60 among the tribe.

The village has a Primary School which was established by the District Janapad Sabha in 1948. The students mainly belonged to the dominant group, i.e., Doria. A few of them were from the Lohar and the Mahar communities. The students who were found to attend the school, besides those from Injiam itself, were from 3 other neighbouring villages lying within a radius of about 4 Kms. Though there were 33 students on the roll as in 1958, attendance was very poor and irregular, and hardly not more than one-third of them were found attending the school daily on an average. Some times it was found that not even a single student could manage to attend the school and this condition prevailed generally during peak agricultural season, when their services were being sought and utilized by their parents for some purposes. The number of female students in the school was very small; hardly one-fifth of the total strength of the roll belonged to the fair-sex.

The percentage of literacy among the villagers was too insignificant to note. According to 1971 census the total number of literates as found in Injiam was 16, the number of males being 12. There was hardly a student who continued the studies up to the final class of the primary level. There was not a single case whereby a student from the village had gone for higher studies beyond the primary level.

The training institutes of indigenous type called *ghatol* in its full and active form are found among the Muria Gonds of Narayanpur and Kondagaon Tahsils of Bastar. A village *ghatol* or bachelors' dormitory is meant for the unmarried youth of both sexes to spend the night over there. A *ghatol* in its rudimentary form is also found among the Hill Maries of Abujmar which is meant only for the boys. But the institution of *ghatol* is not found among any other section of the Bastar Gonds. Though Russell mentions about the existence of *ghatol* among the Gonds of Chhattisgarh, Grison repudiates such claim and expresses doubt about existence of any *ghatol* among the Gonds living outside Bastar. As found generally among most of the Gond groups, their growing children, in normal course of their day-to-day life, pick up and learn by a gradual process everything that pertains to their traditional mode of life by imitating their elders. Such process of socialisation effects in equipping a child with the requisite qualities of becoming a worthy member of the society on attaining maturity. A boy

when reaches the age of about twelve years, starts taking active roles in various economic pursuits as a helping hand to the elders, while a girl at the age of about eight years begins to share the domestic chores with her mother and helps her in various ways.

Occupational pattern

Agriculture forms the main core of subsistence among the Gonds. They are, at present, primarily found to be settled agriculturists everywhere with the exception of a very few limited cases, particularly in some most interior hilly and forested tract. For example, the Hill Maria people of Abujmar in Bastar, who have been described by Grigson as the most wild section of the Gonds, still pursue shifting cultivation. This form of cultivation continues unabated mainly on account of the ecological setting like hilly condition of their habitat where it is rather difficult to adopt plough cultivation. As a policy matter the Government now discourages this type of cultivation and attempts at introducing a settled form of agriculture among the shifting cultivators, sometimes by rehabilitating them in some plain areas at the foothills, providing them with material aids, etc.

Besides agriculture, labour on dailywage basis forms an important occupation of the people, particularly among the landless section. They are engaged as agricultural labourers mainly during an agricultural season by the land-owning communities. The Forest Department sometimes employs them to work in plantation job or in the forest coups for felling trees and transporting timber. They are also employed by the Public Works Department in road building works.

Their association with forests is note-worthy, particularly in case of those living in the remote and forest areas as found in Bastar, Mandla and elsewhere. They derive from forests various items of wide range for their consumption like building materials for houses, agricultural tools and other domestic implements, and fuels for domestic use; besides, wide varieties of forest produce are also collected as food items in form of leaves, flowers, fruits, tubers, etc., to supplement their meagre foodsupply derived from agriculture. Grigson remarks that famine has never been a problem in Bastar on account of the people's dependency on forests in this regard. A forest is also used for grazing their cattle. Hunting is practised as found among

many Gond groups, as an individual enterprise but there are a few occasions when they go for hunting organised on communal basis. But in no way the Gonds may be called as food-gatherers or hunters in the sense the term is used.

Cattle rearing is found to be a very important secondary occupation among the Doria and some Maria people of south Bastar. They are great stock-raisers, owning a good number of cattle heads, and rearing of cattle forms an important economic pursuit of the people. The people of neighbouring areas occasionally visit their villages for purchasing cattle. They also prepare ghee for sale to the local traders.

Land use and ownership pattern

Individual right of ownership over land is recognised among almost all the Gond groups practising settled cultivation. But some sort of joint or group ownership over land is found among the Hill Marias of Abujmar practising shifting cultivation who are having a developed notion of clan territory as reported by Grigson. According to him, the village and not the individual cultivator is the unit of production in the Abujmar hills; but the permanent rice fields which are very few in Abujmar are definitely the private property of the individuals.

Scope for having irrigation facilities is negligible in most part of their habitation, and the people mainly depend on natural rainfall for growing their crops. This holds good particularly for the areas where the people grow inferior type of cereals like millet of various kinds. But where extensive wet cultivation for rice is practised, arrangements are sometimes made for irrigation, provided water-sources like rivers, streams or tanks are located nearby. An agricultural plot is usually utilised for raising of one crop only, but sometimes double cropping is done in a plot by raising some rabi crop after the harvest of the earlier one, but all depend on the fertility condition of the soil. It is found among the Doria to leave fallow a plot of land for one year after it is being used successively for two or three years in growing millet in order to allow the field to regain its fertility; but in case of the plots utilised for growing paddy, it is not necessary to keep them fallow for any length of time.

The Doria of Injiram in Konda Tahsil of Bastar have some system based on co-operative labour for the purpose of agricultural activities. Here it was found that the total amount of agricultural

land under the possession of the villagers was 321.61 acres. Out of this, 25.24 acres were held by 3 households as individual holdings, and 296.37 acres were held by the members of five lineage groups as undivided joint property. That is, about 92.12 per cent of agricultural land was held as undivided joint holdings. In each case of such joint holdings the land in question was in the name of one person who held the right of grant (*patte*), and accordingly he was called *patadar*. Usually a *patadar* happened to be the senior-most of all the other members of the lineage group in question, and the *patte* passed over either to his next brother or to the eldest son on event of his death. In settlement records, a *patadar* was mentioned as *kastkar* (cultivator) while all other co-sharers of the land were referred to as *amarikar* (associated cultivator). Though the legal right of the co-sharers over the land was recognised, yet for all practical purposes a *patadar* appeared to be the real owner of the land; he was responsible for the necessary payment of all cesses assessed on the land under his possession and his decision in any matter regarding land, agricultural activities, etc., was supreme. It was found that in each of the five cases of joint holdings, the land in question had been transferred as ancestral property to the members of the succeeding generation without it being partitioned among the subsequent inheritors with the *patte* in the name of the eldest male member.

The amount of land under each of the five joint holdings with the number of families associated with such land is shown below:

Amount of land under joint holdings	No. of families associated with the land	Total No. of family members
(1)	(2)	(3)
Acres		
78.88	9	53
66.71	5	24
56.78	6	34
56.68	3	13
37.32	5	26
Total 296.37	28	150

So the average size of holdings came to be 10.57 acres per household. Though in such cases the average holdings per household was fairly good, the total agricultural yield was found to be very low due to infertile condition of the soil. On the other hand when considering the ratio of man-power to land, the number of workers as available from the households associated with the joint holdings, was found to be insufficient for full exploitation of the land under their possession. So to utilise the services of the available workforce from within the village, the people took recourse to a system based on co-operative labour. In such system all the workers including males formed a sort of voluntary association known as *kamtam*. A *patadar* by virtue of being the formal holder of right over the land, was recognised as the leader or *pedakam* of the concerned *kamtam* group. To form such a group, the able and adult persons from any household of the village irrespective of their sex and ethnic affiliation, might join at any number as its working members called *kamtam-park*. It was not considered essential that the joint cultivation of such nature was restricted only among the members of those families, which were associated with one another in having the concerned land in common among them. Adult members of all such families were usually included as working members in their own respective *kamtam* cultivation, but it was not obligatory. It had been observed that some of the members of such families, including that of a *pedikam*'s family, might join, besides their own *kamtam*, any other *kamtam*, and at the same time, in addition to it, some might have their own independent cultivation. All the members of a *kamtam* group enjoyed the same status as workers and each of them, either male or female, was entitled to get an equal share of all the crops produced by their joint labour. But a *patadar* had some privileges and he used to get an extra share in addition to his normal share as a working member of the *kamtam* group.

Family and kinship pattern

Simple or nuclear type of family is the usual form and it is found in preponderance over all other types as is the case among all the Gond groups. Joint families also occur in many cases whereby the married sons with their wives and children live in the family of procreation of their father. The daughters after their marriage

leave for their husband's place. But in case when a man has but only one daughter, he usually likes to get his son-in-law settled in his house, and accordingly he selects and brings a boy home and have his services for three to four years for which the daughter is given in marriage to him in exchange of the service already rendered to the father. In such cases the boy (*Jamsena*, *JWam*) continues to live with his wife in his father-in-law's house and ultimately settles down there. Sometimes a man, even having sons, may bring a *Jamsena* for his daughter if he finds difficulties in managing the affairs concerning his field activities and other related matters on account of the minor age of his sons. Thus a joint family may sometimes include, besides others, a married daughter with her husband and a few children, if she happens to bear some of them by then. The nature of a joint family continues to undergo some changes, as in course of time all the sons separate out one after another from the main body and set up their own respective families. Among the Dorla the youngest son continues to stay jointly with the parents along with his wife and children even when his other brothers get separate from the father. It is the duty of the youngest son to maintain and look after his parents in their old age and it is he who ultimately inherits the ancestral house. Among the Gonds of Mandla and Jabalpur, the eldest son inherits his father's house, while other sons get separated from the father to set up their respective establishments with the wives and children occupying some rooms constructed within the very precinct of the main hut.

A family in the Gond society is a significant corporate entity for economic, social and ritual purposes under the authority of its head. A husband is the central authority within the family. His decision is final in all important economic, social and religious matters. The wife has a distinct position in the family, being sole incharge of all the domestic matters. She also takes equal share of the hard life of struggle with her husband and works with him side by side undertaking various activities in fields in production of crops, thus she forms an important pivot in the economic life of the family.

All the relatives of a person are divided into two broad groups consanguinal and affinal. Among the Dorla, those relatives belonging to the agnatic group and having consanguinal relation amongst them are termed as *Kutma*, whereas, all those who belong to the affinal

group are called *wam*. On the other hand, all the relatives, irrespective of their consanguinal or affinal relation, are called *zattam*. The kinship terminology of the Gond, particularly in Bastar is classificatory in nature. But in Jabalpur it is found that the kinship terminologies of the Gond are similar to those found among other local Hindi speaking groups. The Mandla Gonds, on the other hand, have retained some of the kinship terms in Gond; and the rest are expressed in local Hindi. The Kinship terminologies of the greater section of the Gond population are customary among them. A cross-cousin is a potential mate of a person as found among most of the Gond groups. Certain categories of kins have some special role to play, particularly the mother's brother, in some of the important social functions.

Inheritance and other related institutions

According to the normative rules of inheritance as generally found among the Gonds, the right over movable and immovable property passes through the male line from a father to his sons, each getting an equal share. Normally daughters have no right over any property as such. The father, during his life time may give a few things like a few pieces of household articles or one or two heads of cattle as present to a daughter during her marriage. An unmarried daughter, after her father's death, may stay with any of her brothers, usually where her widowed mother resides. It is the duty of the brother who maintains her to arrange for her marriage and so he is entitled to receive the brideprice during her marriage. A widow having no issue is entitled to inherit all the movable property and the house, provided she does not remarry. But finally all such properties pass to the nearest lineage members of her deceased husband when she dies. In case of agricultural land, the widow never enjoys an absolute right over it; she may get some share as a co-cultivator alongwith her sons after her husband's death. If she has no children, the property goes to the nearest lineage member of her husband. In some places it is now found that a daughter also inherits the property of her father including agricultural land if the man has no male issues.

But the present Indian succession acts allow a daughter an equal share of the father's property with the sons. But its effect is not found everywhere. Some people are ignorant of such changes, and even if it is known the people continue to adhere to their old system without any resentment from any side.

In case of succession to an important office in the Gond society, it is a prerogative right of the male members standing in the direct line of a man holding some important office. The women have no such privileges whatsoever. The system of primogeniture is the rule in usual cases. The important offices that are found common in a village are village-headman (called differently in different areas like Patel, Peda, Nayak, Mukaddom, etc.), priest (Pujari, Perma, Gaika, Doshi, etc.), besides the office bearers of different categories who constitute the tribal council at the village or regional level.

Political institutions

It has been noticed among the Gonds of most part of their area that inspite of vast changes in recent years they still adhere to their traditional system in having their tribal council operative as means of social control in dealing with various social offences in their society. It deals with all social breaches, particularly in matter of sex-life and in inter-village disputes on social matters. The introduction of statutory panchayat system among them is of recent origin; but at present its activities are found to be on the whole, directed towards welfare matters. The traditional authority structure (gaon-panchayat), though enjoying control over the social breaches, it is gradually losing control over the matters relating to economic disputes, particularly those arising out of land issues. Criminal matters like petty thefts may also be dealt with by the traditional panchayat if the persons involved happen to belong to their own community, but the offences of grave nature like murders are reported to the Police. Adultery and elopement though come under the criminal procedure under general State law, are still well within the purview of tribal panchayat because such type of cases are quite normative according to their tribal customary rules. In dealing with such cases now-a-days they have adopted certain measures as required under the general criminal law which pervades the Gond society as well.

In case of any inter-village dispute, the gaon-panchayat of the concerned villages sit together for taking decision. If there is no solution, the panchayat of few other neighbouring villages are called for a joint meeting, and the majority decision arrived at in the meeting is binding on the litigating parties. Formerly in certain areas some sort of higher body at regional level was operative to deal with such cases.

The formal composition of a traditional tribal council includes a few office-bearers. The important posts of the office-bearers like village head-man, priest, etc., are of hereditary nature and succession to the office passes from a father to his son, preferably the eldest one. If the man has no son, it goes to some of his nearest lineage members. The village-council alongwith the elderly male members of the village constitutes the general body of the council.

Major economic potentials of the tribal region

The tribal regions are found to be rich in forests. We may think in terms of establishing forest-based industries in such region so that it may be beneficial to the local tribal people in solving their unemployment problem. Mineral resources are also found in many of the tribal regions. For example, Bastar is very rich in iron ore and tin. Formerly tribal Lohars of south Bastar used to extract iron from its ore by their crude and indigenous method. Now, mining project at Bailadilla in the very heart of the Bison-horn Maria of Dantwara in south Bastar has come up for exploitation of iron ore. The Government may also consider about establishing dairy farming and cattle breeding centres in south Bastar where the Dorla and some Maria people are found to be great stock-raisers.

Major social problems

The present process of detribalisation and transformation as found among the Gonds, pose some important problems. The problem of conversion of the Gonds either to Christianity or to Islam is not very significant when compared with other groups elsewhere. On the other hand the process of absorption of the tribals under the Hindu fold by slow and gradual process is always there which is evident in various parts of the Gond country. There are evidences of some social movements among the tribals in some parts of the Gond territory. At the same time it is found that the Gonds are actively conscious about their own tribal identity. Consequently it gives rise to some conflicting situation.

Another important social problem is the integration of the tribal groups into the main stream of our national life. Our attitude towards the tribal people which is generally of

contemptuous nature, should require a thorough change. We should appreciate all the noble qualities of the primitive folk and should attempt for preservation of such qualities possessed by them in face of the transformation which is current among them.

Potentials and problems of development

The area of habitation of the Gonds, when considered as a whole presents a diversified character in its geographical, ecological and cultural settings. In some cases the Gonds are found to live in isolation of some remote and inaccessible areas of forest clad hilly tracts far away from the bustling urban life, while in some other cases they happen to live under the influence of urban or semi-urban settings, sharing in common with others a life of modernity with new ideas and concepts which are alien to their culture. The high standard of integrity blended with simplicity and unassuming nature, which is peculiar to a primitive folk of the remote and interior region has undoubtedly been under great strain when such a group is exposed to the influence of some alien cultures while leading an urban life. Under such circumstances their value system undergoes changes and in most cases they lose their tribal identity gradual and slow process by way of transformation.

The different regions present different sets of problems all depending on the prevailing local conditions. Their problems are too many and it poses an uphill task on part of the Government as well as the social workers to face and tackle them. Most of such problems are, in the main, inter-linked and the results of any remedial measure in tackling one problem may not be fully achieved if the other related problems are left unheeded.

The problems that need attention may broadly be classified into four main categories.

1. Educational
2. Economic
3. General welfare and
4. Eradication of exploitation

Education at primary level is available, at present, in most villages. But more facilities are

required to be provided for higher studies. The people, particularly those living in remote areas, are not in a position to conceive the value of formal education. They fail to understand the significance of such education and assess its attributes due to the hangover of their backwardness. It requires to create a proper environ so that the people can understand the intrinsic value of education. If they conceive the aim behind such education, they are expected to show a receptive attitude. Here the role and responsibility of the teacher are very important. It is he who has to create the interest and a suitable condition among the people in general and the students in particular. Another problem is about medium of instruction particularly in border areas of Linguistic States. For example, the Dorla of Bastar are distributed in the area in close proximity to Telugu country. They understand and speak Telugu, but the children feel much difficulties in getting instruction through Hindi; even the teacher some times experiences difficulties in expressing himself, if he comes from a Hindi speaking area. There are also some other problems, one important problem is the unemployment problem of the educated young men. After having some formal education, if a boy has to revert back to his traditional tribal life, such education becomes meaningless to him and he may at some stage expresses an attitude of divisive or alienated tendency.

All the economic problems are generally related with agriculture. The problem concerns mainly with the shifting cultivation which is still found operative in certain remote pockets. The problems of introducing settled form of cultivation among the people of these areas and that of their rehabilitation are of prime importance. Another important fact is that the people mainly depend on their traditional method of cultivation with the help of primitive type of technological aid. They should be trained in modern technology of agriculture and should be provided with better irrigation system, high yielding variety of seed, fertilizer and pesticide.

Under general welfare scheme there are a number of problems which require immediate attention. The people in most areas suffer due to want of drinking water. Paucity of primary health centres is another problem. There are also need of establishing veterinary dispensaries at different centres.

The exploitation of tribal people by various agencies is not a new problem. It has been reported by great many persons engaged in tribal remedies and by social workers engaged in welfare activities. We are yet to develop a fool-proof system in this regard. The most important problem is about exploitation of the tribal people by the unscrupulous money-lenders, and another one is about alienation of tribal land by non-tribal cultivators who are usually bent upon depriving the tribals of their good fertile land.

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THE KOLS

—Amir Hasan

The Kols along with their kindred races constitute one of the largest segments of Scheduled Tribes population in India. They are listed as a Scheduled Tribe in the States of Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Maharashtra, and number 4,78,821 according to the Census of 1971. In the States of Uttar

Pradesh and Tripura, they are included among the Scheduled Castes numbering 1,36,136. If we add up both Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Kols, their total population comes to 6,14,957 which is 1.6 per cent of the total tribal population.

The Statewise population as enumerated in Census operations is as below:—

TABLE 1
Population of kols

State	Population			
	1921	1931	1961	1971
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Madhya Pradesh ..	2,59,593	2,91,805	3,86,009	4,77,730
Maharashtra ..	..	..	53	58
Orissa ..	..	..	46,397	1,033
Tripura ..	..	..	1,067	519
Uttar Pradesh ..	68,941	76,848	1,26,288	1,36,617
India ..	..	..	5,59,814	6,14,957

In Madhya Pradesh, the Kols have been scheduled under two names, the Kols whose number 1,14,516 and the Kol (Dahait) whose numbers is 3,63,215 according to the Census of 1971.

The following table presents sexwise populations in Rural and Urban areas in respect of 1961 and 1971 Censuses only.

TABLE 2
Sexwise Population in Rural/Urban areas

State	Rural Urban	1961			1971		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
M.P. (a) Kols ..	Rural ..	40,068	40,235	80,303	49,988	51,097	1,01,085
	Urban ..	864	794	1,658	6,835	6,594	13,430
(b) Kols (Dahait)	Rural ..	1,49,905	1,46,265	2,96,230	1,76,410	1,72,214	3,48,624
	Urban ..	3,674	3,584	7,758	7,482	7,099	14,581
Maharashtra ..	Rural ..	26	27	53	8	50	58
	Urban ..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Orissa ..	Rural ..	23,072	23,325	46,397	427	532	959
	Urban ..	..	..	..	39	35	74
Tripura ..	Rural ..	538	506	1,043	237	221	458
	Urban ..	14	10	24	27	24	61
U.P. ..	Rural ..	63,946	60,405	1,24,434	69,464	62,430	1,31,894
	Urban ..	819	1,035	1,854	2,005	1,718	3,723
India ..	Rural ..	2,77,615	2,70,802	5,48,517	2,96,534	2,86,544	5,83,078
	Urban ..	5,571	5,723	11,294	16,409	15,470	31,879

A study of growth of population of Kols in 1971 as compared to 1961 presents the following picture;

TABLE No. 3
Growth of Population

(1)	Percentage increase in 1971 over 1961		
	Total (2)	Rural (3)	Urban (4)
M. P. (a) Kols ..	39.6	25.6	710.0
(b) Kols (Dahait)	19.5	17.7	88.1
Maharashtra ..	9.4	9.4	..
Orissa ..	410.9	410.9	..
Tripura ..	48.6	43.9	154.1
Uttar Pradesh ..	7.4	6.0	100.8
India ..	9.8	..	..

Table 4 summarises the male female ratio in 1971.

TABLE No. 4
Males/Females per Thousand (1971 Census)

Name of State	Male	Female
(1)	(2)	(3)
1. Madhya Pradesh—		
(a) Kols	496	504
(b) Kol Dahait	505	494
2. Maharashtra	138	862
3. Tripura	528	472
4. Uttar Pradesh	527	475
India	509	491

An analysis of these figures brings out the following facts.

The Kol population has on the whole, increased by nearly 1/10 in 1971 as compared to 1961. The increase is highest among M. P. Kols (39.6 per cent) and lowest in U. P. (7.4). The population of Kols has, however, decreased in Tripura and Orissa, much more so in Orissa where it has come down from five figures to four figures. The only possible explanation is that in 1971 Census most of the Kols have been included in another tribe. There is abnormal increase in the number of Kolahe a tribe of Kolarian group (from 2,03,515 in 1961 to 3,10,728 in 1971). It is possible that majority of Kola were returned as Kolahe. As for Kols of Tripura, their population has been halved between the two Censuses. It is said that the Kols of this State are migrants. In that event, variation in their number is quite likely.

As expected the population of Kols in urban areas is negligible although the 1971 figures show marked increase in the number of urban Kols.

As for male/female ratio in M. P. (taking Kols and Kol Dahait together) and U. P., the number of males exceeds that of females and this is the sex ratio obtaining in the population of this tribe as a whole.

Their Habitat

99.7 per cent of the Kols live in Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. Thus the main habitat of the Kols is the Central Zone i. e. the area lying between the Indo-Gangetic plains on the north and river Krishna on the south, commonly known as the Deccan plateau.

In Madhya Pradesh, the Kols live in the eastern half of the State on the main Deccan plateau. The main districts of their concentration are Rewa (1,07,908) Satna (84,276), Jabalpur (79,887), Shahdol (90,921) and Mandla (20,160). In 17 districts of the State, the tribe Scheduled as Kols lives whereas in 7 districts, it occurs as Kol Dahait.

In Uttar Pradesh the districts having Kol population are Mirzapur (58,276), Allahabad (48,390), Banda (17,140), and Varanasi (2,780). They all are southern most districts of Uttar Pradesh bordering northern most Madhya Pradesh districts of Chhataipur, Panna, Satna, Rewa and Saiguja. The Kol area of Uttar Pradesh lies on the Vindhya Kaimur range which, as a matter of fact, constitutes the northern fringe of the Central India plateau.

In Orissa, the Kols are scattered throughout the State. They live along with other Kolarian Tribes like Sonthals, Mundes, Munderia Kolahe, etc. The districts having Kol population to 1971 Census are Keonjhar (329), Phulbani (229), Kalahandi (176), Sundargarh (61), Sambalpur (59), Dhenkanal (53), Koraput (46), Bolangir (38) and Ganjam (1). On the western side, their habitat is contiguous to the eastern portion of Madhya Pradesh, the main country of the Kols and on the north, with Chhotanagpur Plateau, its geographical contours and formations being common to both.

The few Kols found in Maharashtra, occur in the northern portion of the State bordering southern districts of Madhya Pradesh.

Thus the Kols of Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa and Maharashtra live in one and the same geographical area characterized by low lying and undulating plateau, flat topped hills traversed by a net-work of ravines and rivers, sandy soil reddish in colour with bare rocks visible to the eye and containing large varieties of minerals. A long and hot summer, low rainfall and a short and mild winter, are the main characteristics of its climate.

The Kols of the tiny State of Tripura situated in the northern-eastern region of the country bordering Assam and Mizoram on the east and surrounded by Bangladesh on the remaining three sides, however, live in an entirely different geographical area. Their district-wise population according to 1971 Census is as follows:—

West Tripura	..	299
North Tripura	..	214
South Tripura	..	6
		519
		—

Etymology of Kolarian, Kol

The key position of Kols among the tribes of Central Zone is demonstrated from the fact that Sir George Campbell thought it fit to coin the term Kolarian to denote Kols and kindred races¹. According to Wilford, the oldest name of India, was Kolar which owed itself to its inhabitants "Kole, Coils and Coolies"².

According to Col. Dalton³, the word Kol derived from Sanskrit Kolu, meaning a 'pig', was a term of abuse, applied by the Brahminical races to the aborigines of India who opposed their settlement in the beginning. According to Sir John Campbell⁴, the generic name 'Coles' or Koles was applied to the aborigines of the hill country of Chhotanagpur, Mizapur and Rewah. He also feels that the word "Coolies" as applied to a bearer of burden of labourer is the same as Cole or Koles and that, in short, is the term generally applied by the North Indians to the aboriginal tribes most of whom they reduced to serfdom. He further supports Col. Wilford adding that there was good reason to suppose that the original word was Kola or Kolar and that India was best known to the ancients as Kolas or Coolas land and the people as Kolarians Oppert⁵, however, has disputed these views. He has shown that although Kalsuria nymphs has been mentioned by Plutarch, it does not refer to an ancient name of India has

nothing to do with the Koly of Chhotanagpur and that the so-called Kolaria is a purely imaginary appellation based in part on a badly pronounced and distorted plural formation of the name of Kallar or on Kolaras's. He also mentions that there is nothing common between the words Kol on one hand, and Kol (Kuli) and Kola on the other and that Kola and Kole mentioned in the Ramayana and Pauranic Sanskrit literature, should not be confused with the modern Kols⁶.

Russel traces the term Kol from the Santhali 'Har' meaning a man. This word has many forms such as har, hars, ho, horo, current among the Munda Tribes, to denote themselves. The change of H to K and R to L, being familiar and possible, the term, in course of time, assumed different forms 'Koro' Kolo and ultimately Kol.⁷

Whether Dalton is right that the name Kol was thrust by the invading Aryans on the Hos of Chhotanagpur, or not, the term Kol is still loathsome to the Hos and they refuse to be designated as such, despite the fact the term Kolhan (Kol-sthan or land of the Kols) has stuck to their habit.⁸

Despite the considerable divergence of views on the origin and etymon of the term Kol, there is little doubt that Kols and other races of the Kolarian group are among the most ancient races of India. Haddon⁹ has placed the Kolar among the pre-Dravidian races. There are strong reasons to hold that the Mundas settled in the country of Chhotanagpur and the Central Provinces earlier than the Dravidian tribes like Gonds, Khonds and Orsons who came later¹⁰.

Races of Kolarian Group

The tribes counted among the Kolarian group of races are Mundas, Ho, Santhal, Bhumijs.

Tamaris, Juang, Larka Kol, Kharis, Konkus, Bhuinya, Chero, Khairwar, Baiga, Bhl, Korwa, Saver, Nihal, Male (Mal), Gadabs, Bhaina and Binjhar of which all except the Mundas, Hos, Kharis, Santhals and Konkus who still retain Munda languages, have lost their own languages

1. Dr. Gustav Oppert, the Original Inhabitants of India

2. Ibid

3. Ibid

4. Ibid

5. Ibid

6. Ibid

7. Ibid

8. R.V. Russell and Rai Bahadur Hiralal, The Tribes and Castes of Central Provinces of India.

9. W. Crooke, Castes and Tribes of North, Western Provinces and Coas.

10. D. N. Majumdar, The Affairs of a Tribe

11. A. C. Haddon, Races of Man

12. Majumdar, Op. Cit.

speaking corrupt forms of the current¹³. Aryan dialects drawn from Sanskrit¹⁴, it will not be advisable to include Koli and Oran among them as some authorities have done.

It is now, more or less, an agreed view that the Kols have spread out from their earlier habitat, Chhota Nagpur to Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh¹⁵. The same holds good for the Kols of Orissa who are stated to have migrated in the hoary past from Singhbhum, Mayurbhanj Chhota Nagpur¹⁶. This also finds support from Sherring who stated that the Kols of Sambalpur came from the directions of Chhota Nagpur¹⁷. Most of the Kols of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, however, claim the erstwhile Rewa State as their original home¹⁸. The Kols of Banda and Allahabad in Uttar Pradesh claim Chitrakut in Banda district as their habitat¹⁹.

Legends of Origin

According to a legend quoted by Crooke Yayuti, the fifth king of the Lunar race, divided his empire among his five sons, one of them being Turasu. Among his descendants were four brothers Pandya, Korala, Chola and Kola who inherited his empire. The present Kols are descendants of Kola²⁰.

Crooke also cites the Munda legend according to which, the self-existent primeval gods Ote Boram and Sing Bonga created a boy and a girl to people the world. They were taught to prepare rice beer on taking of which their passions were inflamed and they cohabited. In due course, they were blessed with twelve sons and twelve daughters who were paired off and set to start the world. The fate of their descendants was determined by the food each pair chose for themselves. The first and second pairs chose the flesh of buffalo and buffaloes and from them originated the Kols (Mos) and Bhumijs (Malkum). The next took only vegetables and their descendants were the Brahmins and Chhatris. The Sudras are descendants of the pair who chose the meat of goat and fish. One pair took shell fish and became Bhuiyias.

Two pairs are pig and from them descended the Saathals. The last pair could get nothing seeing which the first pair gave them a portion from their share. Ghasias, who make living by prying on others, have sprung from this last pair²¹.

The Kols of Mirzapur have legend of kingdom in the Gangetic valley from where they were driven southwards by the Sarvasas. The pargana of Kol Aals in Varanasi district still bears their name²².

The Kols of Banda claim descentance from Savari who, as depicted in Ramayana, served Rama during his stay at Chitrakut lying on the fringe of the Kol habitat in Banda district²³. The same legend is prevalent among the Kols of Jabalpur²⁴.

Religion and Ritual

The Kols of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh seem to have forgotten Sing Bonga, the Sun God of Mundas and Hinduized themselves in course of time. True in Mirzapur, the Kol bows before Suryanarain, the Sun God, while leaving his house in the morning but then this is what the Hindus, too do²⁵ and, therefore, there is no basis to connect this practice to Munda tradition.

The Kols of Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh appear to be more Hinduized than their brethren in the North but still their religion is a quaint mixture of animism and Hinduism. Along with the worship of Hindu gods, like Mahadeva or Siva, Hanuman, Rama and Krishna²⁶ they have their own pantheon of gods. They specially worship "Devi" and carry Her tridents about with them²⁷. In the month of Kuar and Chait, they sow barley in pots and on the ninth day consign the pots to a river or tank. At that time, the Devi descends on some of the worshippers who jump about like mad men. This is called Bhao Chhama and a trident is given to the person so affected. He pierces his cheek with it and lets it to remain there for hours. When the trident is taken out, the hole is quickly filled up²⁸. They

13. Majumdar, Op. Cit., Russell and Hissel Op. Cit.

14. Russell and Hissel, Op. Cit.

15. L.S. Chakraverty-Pemsey, Bengali Gazetteer of Pundaravy States of Orissa, Part II.

16. Rev. M. A. Sherring, Hindu Tribes and Castes, Vol. II

17. W. Crooke Op. Cit., Village Surveys (M.P.) Monograph No. 8 (Jabalpur), Census of India, 1901 (also Walter G. Griffiths The Kol Tribes of Central India).

18. Amir Hasan, The Kols of Patna

19. W. Crooke, Op. cit.

20. Ibid

21. Ibid

22. Amir Hasan, Op. Cit.

23. Village Monograph No. 8, Jaitpur, Census of India (M. P.), 1901.

24. Crooke, W. Op. Cit.

25. Jaitpur, Op. Cit.

26. Russell and Hissel, Op. Cit.

27. District Gazetteer, Jabalpur, Op. Cit.

also worship Fulmiti (Phulmati) and Raksel. The Kol of Katholia sept worship the tiger as Beghaut Baba who is supposed to reside in every household. If a tiger is killed within the limits of his village, a Katholia Kol will throw away earthen pots as in mourning, have his head shaved and feed a few men of his sept²⁸.

Important Gods of Kols of Mirzapur are Gansam, Dulhadeo and Raj-a-Lakhan. They also worship the aggregate of the local gods (dih, deohar) through the village Baiga. Raksel and Phulmati too as mentioned in case of Jabalpur Kols, are worshipped²⁹.

Important gods of Kols of Banda are Dulhadeo, Goraya, Baradeo (Probably same as Gansam) and Phulmati Jogini.³⁰ The Kols, like other Tribals believe in a large number of spirits both benevolent and malevolent and live in their constant fear. This also explains prevalent ancestor worship among them.

The Kols appear to have abandoned regular Munda festivals. They observe the usual Hindu festivals,³¹ like Narasatri, Khichri, Holi, Diwali etc.

Social Structure

The Kols are divided into a number of sub-castes or endogamous division. The following are the important sub-castes occurring among the Kols of Madhya Pradesh as mentioned by Russell³².

1. Rautia

2. *Rautia*—Both take their names from 'Rawa' a 'Prince'. The Rautias practice, hypergamy with the Rautels that is, they take the daughters of Rautels in marriage but do not give their daughters to the latter. They eat with the latter at the marriage feast only.

3. *Thakuria*—They are from 'thakuria', a lord, said to be off-springs of Rajput father and Kol mother.

4. *Kagwari*—Their name is derived from 'kagwar', an offering made to forefathers in the month of Kuar.

5. *Desahi*—Their name originates from 'Desh' (home-land) which refers to Rewa.

According to Crooke,³³ Dahals (Scheduled as a separate tribe in M.P.) meaning villagers are actually Rautias. They have another off-shoot Mahtiya (Mahsa, a leader) with whom they intermarry on equal terms.

Two more sub-divisions Kundaha and Gadhwaria are mentioned by Jabalpur Kols³⁴. The Gazetteer of this district mentions yet another sub-division. Rakwars and points that the Rewars and Gadhwarias are territorial names, the former referring to a place in the United Provinces and the latter to a carya near 'Jabalpur'. Griffiths adds many more sub-divisions which, according to him are called Kurli and occasionally gqtras by the Kols³⁵.

Among the Kols as U.P. the main endogamous subdivisions of Kurli as they call them are :—

Rajwaris according to Crooke,³⁷ derive their name from the Bangal Rajwaris. They are mainly found in Mirzapur and Varanasi³⁸.

2. Rautia (Rautia)

3. *Thakuria*—These two are mostly found in Banda and Allahabad³⁹.

4. *Mawasia (Mawasia)*—They are found in Banda⁴⁰. The Mawasis as mentioned by Griffiths are also found in M. P.⁴¹.

Crooke also mentions Banai, Barwar (descendants of the fig tree), Bins, Harwayya (ploughman) and Hamriyanwa (people of the 'cooking pot')⁴².

While the Mundas have still preserved their system of totemistic septs, most of the Kols seem to have shed them off, Russell however, mentions Bargaiyas, Kathethias and Kathourias as three distinct totemistic septs in Madhya Pradesh⁴³.

28. Jaipur, Op. Cit.

29. Crooke W, Op. Cit.

30. Amir Hasan, Op. Cit.

31. Crooke W, Op. Cit.

32. Russell and Hiralal, Op. Cit.

33. Crooke W, Op. Cit.

34. Jaipur

35. Ibid.

36. Griffiths, Op. Cit.

37. Crooke, N. Co. C. Cit.

38. Amir Hasan, Op. Cit.

39. Ibid.

40. Ibid.

41. Griffiths, Op. Cit.

42. Crooke, Op. Cit.

43. Russell and Hiralal, Op. Cit.

The Family

The Kol family is patrilineal and patrilocal. The Kols with 81 per cent simple households, have clearly shown their preference for a simple family unit⁴⁴.

A study of village Jaitpuri in M.P. showed that 81 per cent families were nuclear⁴⁵. A study of Banda Kols, too, gave the same percentage of nuclear families⁴⁶. An average Kol family in Jaitpuri consisted of 4.13 and that of Banda 4.6 persons⁴⁷. It is thus clear that most of Kol families consist of parents, unmarried children and sometime one or more lineally related dependant (s).

Kinship

In addition to persons descended from a common ancestor, members of the families connected by marriage are, considered relations. The relations of the wife are also held to be the relations of the husband. They remember genealogies up to the third or fourth generation and the names of women up to that of their grandmother.

In Banda, it was found that the Kols did not remember the names of their ancestors beyond father's father and father's mother. There were no well known Kinship terms beyond the grand-parent's stage⁴⁸.

Marriage Regulations

As stated above, Kols do not usually marry outside their sub-castes or Kuris, although Rautias claiming a superior status, practise hypergamy with Raubals. However, totemistic septs whenever still in existence in M. P., for instance, in Mandala and Jabalpur are exogamous although violation of the rule of exogamy are not uncommon. Outside his sept, a man has freedom to marry any woman except sisters of his mother or step-mother.⁴⁹ Where septs have been forgotten, marriage is forbidden between relations to whom sacramental coles are distributed at a wedding⁵⁰.

According to Crooke, the Kols of a particular Kuri do not intermarry as long as any relationship between the parties are remembered or into the families of the maternal grandfather or father's sister⁵¹.

The system of payment of bride price is prevalent throughout. The months of marriage in M. P. are Agahana, Magh and Phalgun. Magh being preferred⁵². In U. P. the Kols prefer Jaith and Baisakh for marriage and Agahana for Gauna⁵³. According to Crooke, infant marriages are not customary except among the more Hinduized branches of the tribe⁵⁴. The age of marriage among Jaitpuri Kols was found to be 16 years for boys and 12 years for girls⁵⁵. In Banda, the ages of groom and bride were found to be 12 and 10 respectively⁵⁶. Thus child marriage is on the increase. Polygamy although not very common is no taboo either. There is no tradition of polyandry but Crooke mentions a modified form of polyandry imposed on the Kols of Rewa by the Raja of the State. It is said that the Raja was fond of visiting such of his subjects who had pretty daughters whom he used for his pleasure. This part time was termed *bijai kama* (conquering). He used to give villages to a girl who pleased him. Such villages were known as *bijayagrams* (Victory Villages)⁵⁷.

Separation and Remarriage

Both divorce and remarriage of widows or separated persons are permitted. In Raigarh, the widow has, as a custom, to marry her deceased husband's younger brother⁵⁸.

According to Crooke, the deceased's younger brother has the first claim on the widow. Only on his refusal, she can remarry elsewhere⁵⁹.

A wife or husband can seek separation on the grounds of habitual infidelity and eating food not permitted by the tribe⁶⁰. Other grounds for divorce are, sterility of wife, suspicion of being a witch, or of quarrelsome nature⁶¹. However, divorce on these grounds is rather rare because

44. Ibid

45. Jaitpuri

46. Amir Hasan, Op. Cit.

47. Jaitpuri

48. Amir Hasan, Op. Cit.

49. Crooke W. Op. Cit.

50. Amir Hasan, Op. Cit.

51. Russell and Hiralal, Op. Cit.

52. Ibid

53. Crooke, W. Op. Cit.

54. Russell and Hiralal, Op. Cit.

55. Amir Hasan, Op. Cit.

56. Crooke, Op. Cit.

57. Jaitpuri

58. Amir Hasan, Op. Cit.

59. Crooke, Op. Cit.

60. Russell and Hiralal, Op. Cit.

61. Crooke W. Op. Cit.

62. Ibid

63. Jaitpuri

there is considerable tolerance in the Kol Society in such matters. Separation, however becomes inevitable when a woman is seduced by a lover in which event, the lover has to pay the marriage expenses to her previous husband⁶⁴.

Attitude Towards Sex

The Kols exhibit considerable understanding and tolerance in matters of sex although it must be stated that prostitution in the tribe is unknown and married Kol women have better character than the Hindus of the same social grade⁶⁵. The Kol husband usually overlooks occasional infidelity on the part of his wife but if she commits adultery with a stranger, she is expelled from the tribe. Concubinage outside the tribe is prohibited, but a Kol is free to cohabit with any woman of the Tribe and children from such an alliance have claim on property. Sexual intercourse with an unmarried girl is tolerated but if the girl has an intrigue with an outsider, she is outcasted⁶⁶.

Tribal Organization

According to Griffiths, almost every Kol Village in Central Province, has a headman called Mahato, literally, a leader. He is assisted by a functionary called Chharibardar. He takes decisions on matters affecting the village community with the help of influential persons of the village⁶⁷.

The real power to decide disputes rests with the village Panchayat consisting of all the influential people of the community and possessing "Dharma and Dhan" (Piety and property). The panches, as the members are called, are not elected. The following are some of the matters dealt with by a Kol Panchayat⁶⁸.

- (1) Eating and drinking with other castes, if such has been forbidden.
- (2) Sexual aberration.
- (3) Marriage disputes.
- (4) Divorce and care of children.
- (5) Failure to support the family.

- (6) Debt, drink, betting and quarrels.
- (7) Injury to or killing of sacred animals.
- (8) Defying of traditions not listed above.
- (9) Raising of funds or supplies for socio-religious observance.
- (10) Property and inheritance when in dispute.

The decisions of the panchayats are rigidly complied with. They are not easy to violate because of the social pressure the panchayat can build against the recalcitrant. However, in matters regarding property and inheritance the aggrieved party may go to a law court and sometimes even the Panchayat advises so⁶⁹.

In Mandla, the head of the panchayat is called Gauntia. The office is hereditary and the incumbent always belongs to Bagriya sept⁷⁰.

Among the Uttar Pradesh Kols, the head of the village Panchayat is called Mukhiya or Chaudhary. Among the Banda Kols, the post is not hereditary but according to Crooke the post was hereditary⁷¹ presumably in Mirzapur and Varanasi districts. In many villages there is no permanent membership of the Panchayat. Whenever there is a dispute, the Mukhiya nominates a panel to decide it⁷².

The Kols have also intervillage Panchayats federation to consider and decide matters affecting the tribe as a whole⁷³. Griffiths mentions an intervillage organ near Katni consisting of twenty to thirty Kol Committees⁷⁴. In Banda (U.P.), the Village Panchayats are affiliated to the grand Panchayat having sway over a number of villages. The Mukhiyas as well as a few important Kols of the constituent village Panchayats form the Grand Panchayat which elects its chief, also called 'Mukhiya' form amongst the members. No women are members of village or grampanchayat⁷⁵.

The usual punishments inflicted by the Panchayat on a wrong doer are a cash fine, community feast or outcasting the culprit⁷⁶ for a specified or unspecified period. Generally the outcaste is restored to the community on feedings the brotherhood⁷⁷.

64. Crooke, Op. Cit.

65. Ibid.

66. Ibid.

67. G. Griffiths, Op. Cit.

68. Ibid.

69. Ibid. 70. Russell and Hinde, Op. Cit.

71. Amir Hasan, Op. Cit. 72. Crooke W. Op. Cit.

73. Amir Hasan, Op. Cit. 74. Ibid. 75. Griffiths, Op. Cit.

76. Amir Hasan, Op. Cit.

77. Ibid. 78. Crooke W. Op. Cit.

The Madhya Pradesh Panchayat Act, 1962 provided for special Adivasi Panchayats. The special provisions, however, now stand repealed. It is not known how far the Act met the requirements of the Kols. There is, however, no gainsaying the fact that the Kol Panchayats are in a state of decay, mainly on account of the statutory Panchayats which, at least in U. P., are more or less, a non-tribal affair and do more harm than good to the Kols.

Inheritance

As among the Mundas, the sons inherit the property among the Kols, too. If there are no sons, the property passes on to the father or brother, if any. The share of each son is equal except that the eldest son gets something in excess of others. The daughters both married and un-married have no claim on property but they are entitled for maintenance being allotted to sons, just like livestock. The sons also share the brideprice fetched in the sister's marriage. The inheritance is not decided until the youngest son comes of age.⁷⁸

The practice of adoption is prevalent. An adopted son loses his right in the property of his natural father and becomes entitled to inherit the property of the adopting parent as a natural son.⁷⁹

Kol Economy

According to Russell, prior to their contact with Hindus, the Mundas lived on fruit and root because their language has no term for village trade and agricultural implements⁸¹. Although the Mundas and Kol separated in the forgotten past, they still share the common heritage of poverty and their main occupation of being labourers.

According to Griffiths, the Kols of Central province were mostly day labourers. Usually

payments were made in kind. In villages, they were paid three pounds of wheat for a day's work. In cash, they were paid 1.5 annas (ten paise) daily each. Women workers were paid about half of the above wages. Wages were better in urban areas where daily wages in industrial plants ranged between 4 to 5½ annas (25 to 35 paise). Griffiths also found that Kol families moved from place to place in search of work and that was why they lived in crude houses made of mud walls and with a roofing of thatch⁸².

According to Crooke, most of the Kols were ploughmen although a few cultivated their own land. The ploughmen were paid two seers of grain per day, besides a blanket, a leaf umbrella and a rupee and half in cash per-annum as well as special food at festivals. They were also given a Bigha land free of rent this being called Kola or Koliya. The village land-lord took two days forced labour from them in a year, once for ploughing and the other for thatching his house. Many Kols also indulged in the practice of shifting cultivation, locally called dahyo⁸³.

In Varanasi district the Kols earned their living by cutting wood and as water carriers, fisherman and agricultural labourers⁸⁴.

A study of Census figures of 1931, in respect of Central Provinces shows that 56 per cent of the Kols were employed as field labourers and 15.7 per cent in unspecified jobs whereas 16 per cent were agriculturists. Thus 71.7 per cent earned their living as labourers. Only 12.3 per cent were engaged in other occupations.

That the same occupational pattern has persisted through the ages and that there has been no significant occupational mobility, would be evident from the analysis of Census figures of 1961 and 1971 as discussed in the paragraphs that follow.

78. Crooke W. Op. Cit. Russell and Hirstel. Op. Cit.

80. Crooke W. Op. Cit.

81. Russell and Hirstel Cit.

82. Griffiths Op. Cit.

83. Crooke W. Op. Cit.

84. Shering, M. A. Op. Cit. (Vol. I)

Working Force

Table 5 presents the percentage of total workers among the Kols.

TABLE 5
Percentage of Workers

(1)	1961		1971	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1. M. P.				
(a) Kols	..	60.8	59.0	49.4
(b) Kol	..	62.0	48.5	49.6
2. Maharashtra	..	58.6	..	68.5
3. Orissa	..	48.7	..	26.5
4. Tripura	..	51.8	58.2	43.4
5. U. P.	..	62.2	32.7	49.2

It is striking that the percentage of workers has considerably declined between 1961—1971. This is hard to explain because by no stretch of imagination the economy of Kols has improved. The possibility that the employment opportunities of the Kols have dwindled, however cannot be ruled out.

Let us now have a look at the ratio of males and females in the working force.

TABLE 6
Male/Female Ratio per 1000 Workers
A. 1961 Census

State	Rural		Urban	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1. M. P.				
(a) Kols	..	515	485	628
(b) Kols Dahait	..	530	470	621
2. Maharashtra	..	467	533	..
3. Orissa	..	548	452	..
4. Tripura	..	517	516	756
5. U. P.	..	544	456	677

B. 1971 Census

State		Rural		Urban	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
(1)		(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1. M. P.					
(a) Kol	..	582	418	648	352
(b) Kol	..	577	423	722	278
Dahait					
2. Maharashtra	..	..	1,000	..	..
3. Orissa		752	248	Both Rural & Urban	
4. Tripura	..	628	372	909	91
5. U. P.	..	600	400	894	106

While these figures clearly establish that the women form a significant portion of the working force and contribute to the family's earnings, a comparison of the Census of 1961 with that of 1971, shows that the proportion of women in the working force has declined both in rural and urban areas. This can be because of three factors. Either following in the foot-steps of the non-tribals, the Kols, too, are gradually

discouraging their women to work for a living or because of deterioration in their working condition, lesser number of women especially the younger ones, are coming forward to work on hire or the job opportunities have decreased.

The following figures give an idea of the occupational distribution of Kols :—

TABLE No. 7
A. Occupational Distribution

1961						
State	Rural/ Urban	Cultivators	Agricultural labourers	Mining etc.	Other Categories	Total of workers
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Madhya Pradesh						
(a) Kol	..	(R) 16.4 (U) 6.5	29.4 9.2	2.9 12.0	11.88 31.3	60.58 59.00
(b) Kol	..	(R) 10.8 (U) 5.0	43.9 4.2	2.7 13.5	4.46 2.59	61.61 25.29
Dahait						
Maharashtra	..	(R) .. (U) ..	.. ..	54.7 ..	1.9 ..	56.60 ..
Orissa	..	(R) 26.1 (U) ..	12.6 ..	6.2 ..	3.87 ..	48.77 ..
Tripura	..	(R) 18.2 (U) ..	5.6 ..	17.4 ..	10.6 ..	51.80 ..
U. P.	..	(R) 11.5 (U) 0.4	44.8 4.1	1.5 0.4	4.4 27.8	62.2 32.7

These figures clearly show that formal education has not made much headway among the Kols. It is almost negligible among the women. Despite the schemes of scholarship and re-imbursement of fee, incidence of education beyond primary school, is very low, as the following figures would show.

TABLE
Education among Kols, Matriculation and beyond

(1)	Number of Persons			
	1961		1971	
	M	F	M	F
(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	
Matriculation and above but below graduation ..	62	2	1,199	39
Graduation and above ..	1	1	36	2

Although it is gratifying that figures of 1971 show considerable improvement over the position of 1961, the position is still far from satisfactory.

Potentials and Problems of Development

The Deccan plateau and extensions of this plateau as well as Chhota Nagpur plateau in Orissa, possess a large number of minerals. Most important among them are coal, iron and manganese, besides geological formations like bauxite, limestone, monazite, granite, silica sand, etc. These minerals have been largely exploited and consequently the area has been industrialized. Giant steel plants have come up under public sector. The tract has a great potential for development of cement, paper, chemical and glass industries besides industries based on forest produce. The area is, however, not very fertile for cultivation. The main crops are millets, pulses, rice and wheat and under the Community Development Programme there has been continuous efforts to develop agriculture with encouraging results.

Thus, there is no doubt that the Kols live in an area which has a great economic potential. But the glaring fact that there has been little occupational mobility among the Kols. The development and industrialization of the area has brought little improvement in the economic condition of the Kols. On the contrary the possibility that, the development process adversely affected the interests of the Kols, can not be ruled out. In any case there is no doubt that their socio-economic life was disturbed in

larger or smaller measure. A study of the Kols social institutions, economic condition and expansion of education among them brings out the following points.

Social

(1) Their traditional panchayats are gradually decaying.

The Statutory Panchayats have not been equal to their task among the Kols.

(2) Probably as a result of non-tribal influence, the number of working Kol women, is on the decrease. This will lower the status of women in the Kol society, besides jeopardizing the Kol economy.

Education

(1) The progress of literacy and education in general is not satisfactory. It is extremely poor among the women.

(2) Higher education including technical education is negligible among this tribe.

Economic

(1) The Kols, by and large, have remained labourers. There is no marked occupational mobility among them.

(2) The percentage of landholders among them has decreased instead of increasing.

(3) A large section of the Kol population is indebted.

(4) There is evidence of bonded labour among them in certain areas.

(5) In forest areas, they are being exploited by forest contractors.

It is evident that the most glaring problem of the Kols is their poverty which has persisted despite considerable funds invested for their economic development. The main reason for this state of affairs is the serfious exploitation by farmers, contractors, and money lenders, despite laws protecting the interest of the tribals. The hard truth is that the exploiters without contributing any thing in tribal areas but have acquired respectability enjoying considerable political and sometime official patronage. They have got themselves at Gonsabha, Block and district levels. The result is that they manage to remain above law. Therefore, enactment of laws alone will not end exploitation. The State Government must gear up their policy and administrative machinery to deal with exploiters, landgrabbers, money lenders, contractors, farmers and prosecutors effectively and put an end to age-old exploitation.

As for gainful employment of Kols, they would like to be settled on land having been long associated with it as labourers. This, however, is not a practical solution, for it has not been possible to increase the area of land under the ownership of Kols during the past 7 years of planning. Moreover the land under their plough or that likely to be allotted to them is far from being fertile. Having been habitual wage earners, they cannot be successfully self employed independently. The best course therefore would be to set up small factories or industrial processing units under public or co-operative sectors at walking distance from tribal villages, where the Kols, both men and women can get jobs at reasonable wages. Such factories or industrial units should make use of only simple machinery and use as raw material such stuff as are handled by the Kols in their daily life for instance, agricultural and forest produce and minerals of the area.

Forest plays an important role in the economy of the Kols. In many areas forest contractors are directly responsible for the indebtedness, bondage and poverty of the Kols. In Banda for instance, the Kols are forced at a nominal wage to pick up kandu leaves. The Kols living in forest

areas possess a thorough knowledge of the forest and forest produce and feel at home while working in the forest. There is great scope for improvement of their economy if the contract system for gathering of forest produce and their processing is gradually abolished and the Kols directly deal with the Department and Public Undertakings.

Neither as agriculturists nor as hired wage-earners, the Kols can hope to become well off. For this, their occupational mobility is a must. To achieve this, they have to be educated through sustained efforts.

It is through education in general schools and technical institutions that would ultimately help Kols to adopt more remunerative occupations.

While there is scope for improvement in the educational schemes for Kols, the drawbacks should be removed and the problems of stagnation and wastage should receive our serious attention. It is the proverbial poverty of Kols that should receive the top most priority from those who are planning for their development.

Socially, we have to respect tribal institutions and take steps to preserve them. Reformist activities by socio-religious or politico-religious institutions must be discouraged. Kol women enjoy considerable freedom in personal matters and are earning members of their families. Their status of near equality with their men and their freedom must not be interfered with. The Kols should be allowed full freedom to develop according to their own genius. At the same time, the development process and intercommunication are bound to bring changes in their socio-economic life and influence their values. We have no business to prevent them from adjusting themselves to changing circumstances either.

Lastly, the Central Government may do away the anomaly of the Kols being a Scheduled Tribe in some States and a Scheduled Caste in others. Acknowledgement, I wish to express my thanks to Mr. Kaushal Kishore, Investigator, Tribal Research Centre, Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow who took pains to collect a large portion of materials and data for this paper and also assisted me in preparation of tables used in the paper.

Grateful thanks are also due to the following for helping me in collection of material for this paper.

- (1) Dr. B. D. Sharma .. Secretary, Tribal and Harijan Welfare Department, M. P., Government, Bhopal.
 - (2) Shri S. L. Kalia .. Director, Tribal Research Institute, M. P., Bhopal
 - (3) Shri H. N. Agarwal .. Research Officer, Tribal Research Institute, M. P., Bhopal
 - (4) Shri N. G. NAG .. Assistant Registrar, General (S. S.), Office of the Registrar, General, India, New Delhi.
 - (5) Shri S. Sharma .. Director of Welfare for Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Castes, Tripura, Agartala.
 - (6) Dr. N. Patnaik .. Director, Tribal and Harijan Research-cum-Training Institute, Orissa, Bhubaneswar.
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The Saora view of 'Good life' 'Happy life' and of 'Development'

—G. Mohapatra

Development is a very complex process in tribal areas. It is emphatically oriented towards ensuring a happy and prosperous life to the families and the communities. The development planners and administrators in India have all the good intentions, sincerity and devotion to the cause of a happy and prosperous life for the society. But usually they have assumed the universal applicability of their own ideas to such things. This assumption on their part may not conflict with the majority view of happy and prosperous life. But it may violently clash with the minority views of happy and prosperous life. And here, we are concerned very much with the view of the cultural minorities, a major segment of which is composed of tribal people of India. Their view point, their evaluation and assessment in terms of their goals towards a happy and prosperous life may not be decisive in formulating the development plan for a region. But these should be taken into consideration with a concern and sympathy for their well-being to the extent these do not run directly counter to the national goals and objectives of development. In other words, it is to be explored and assessed if the tribal people of a region share the same goals and objectives of development as the planners and administrators have, and if so, to what extent, before a particular set of changes are introduced in a region supposedly to serve their best interest.

This insiders' view of development or any change or of any thing happening in the tribal society or in villages and cities, is always emphasised by Anthropologists. They distinguish between

"etic" conception or view as coming from an outsider or an observer, on the one hand, and an "emic" conception or view of the insider or participant, on the other. An Anthropologist is conscious of the social and moral values of the cognitive system of a tribal or any other culturally autonomous group, which may be very much different from his own or from that vast majority of his country. But he also knows, that because of his differences in the value system and in the cognitive system of the people concerned, the development process cannot go as straight as in other areas and a different development strategy has to be adopted for them. He also appreciates the fact that the concepts of good life or moral life, happy and prosperous life in a tribal community may be different from one another but they are involved in one another and hence are independent and affect the process of development. Of course, in a changing situation in which most of the tribes find themselves today, these concepts may be varying between the young and old or between those who have adopted Hindu or Christian way of life and those who have tried to stick to their hoary traditions or between the educated and illiterate sections of the same tribal people.

The good life, in the view of any people, belongs to the moral order. One leads a good life by observing social and religious norms and this conformity to the norms ensures him appreciation in this life from his neighbours, friends, relatives and from his people in general. If there is a conception of after life with rewards and punishments for conducting this life, a good life in conformity with the norms including religious norms ensures

him reward in the form of cherished objects, comforts or attributes in the after life. If approaching God or merging in Godhood is also a cherished religious goal, this becomes the highest reward to be sought through leading a good life on earth. Leading a happy life, on the otherhand, is oriented towards enjoying or having the capacity to enjoy good things of life. These good things may be conceived of differently in different cultures, but these invariably ensure personal or familial euphoria usually through good food, drinks, comfortable housing, good dress, having plenty to feast upon with friends and relatives, enjoying good health and perhaps reveling in sex, having servants to order about or having dependants over whom one has lot of control, progressive reduction of volume of manual labour or dirty work. This happy life may conflict with social, religious and moral principles of a society under certain circumstances. But this cannot flout the norms continuously over a long period. For, in the last eventuality the material means to such well-being may be withdrawn or effectively reduced and thus may not sustain the bases of such a happy life for any length of time.

We have yet to clarify the concept of prosperous life, as the invariant goal of development, whether in the context of tribal or non-tribal, is always prosperity of the families and communities concerned. Prosperity in life refers to the achievement of desired goals. This may be material acquisition, prestige attainment in a stratified society. Enjoyment of leisure is a concomitant of prosperity. Indulging in politics or social service without remuneration is similarly a possible utilisation of leisure, following from material prosperity. Often material prosperity can be utilised as a lever for enhancing one's social position. That means, economic advancement may secure higher position and prestige in the society to the extent that these positions can be achieved as distinct from the inherited positions.

Scope

After having discussed the concepts of good life, happy life and prosperous life in relation to development in a particular region or in a particular ethnic group, we may take up the case study of the Saora of Ganjam Agencies. This case study may show how the sponsored development process through the Government agencies, as conforming to the requirements of good life, happy life and pros-

perous life of Saora, as they visualize. It is also possible to examine whether the ends and means of sponsored development came into conflict with the indigenous concepts of good life, happy life and prosperous life. Further, as the Saora of Ganjam Agencies are no longer a homogenous community of Lanja Saora or primitive Saora, it has been necessary to examine the issues with reference to Lanja Saora, the Hinduised Sudha Saora and the Christianised Saora living in rural areas of Ganjam district.

Methodology

The first Research Project has been carried out for Ph. D. thesis on the subject of "Sudha Saora: a study of Hinduization of a tribal community in Orissa" by the author. The second Research Project on "Social Ecology of persistence of Shifting Cultivation in Saora Hills", was conducted by the Research Assistants, Shri R. N. Pati, Shri N. Jena and Shri R. N. Bahera under the guidance of Dr. L. K. Mohapatra, Professor and Head of the Department of Anthropology, Utkal University, Van Vihar, Bhubaneswar, during the year 1977-79. The first project took me to 16 villages under C. D. Blocks of Nuagada and R. Udayagiri. Under the Second project 4 villages, under the C. D. Blocks of Gumma, R. Udayagiri and Nuagada, were intensively studied. The techniques of observation, group interview, individual interview and case studies have been used for compilation of their conceptions of good life, happy life and prosperous life and of the development process in general. However, it must be acknowledged that the result of this study as embodied in this paper, cannot be considered to be fully representative of the various sections of the Saora population of Ganjam Agencies.

The Saora of Ganjam Agency

The Saora, Sabara or Sahara numbering 342,757 in 1971 are found all over Orissa State. But the Saora of Ganjam agency areas and the adjoining areas of Koraput district occupy a compact region of hills and valleys. We are concerned in this paper with the Saora of (Tribal Development Agency) Ganjam Agencies. They number so many in the Tribal Development Agency region of Parikhamandi subdivision. This tribe is not a homogeneous one although its major subdivisions share a common cultural heritage. In the present context, it would be appropriate to divide the tribe into three sections, i.e. (i) the Primitive or Lanja Saora, (ii) the

Hinduized or 'Sudha Sabara', (ii) the converted or Christian Saora. Again, the primitive section consists of the endogamous social groups like, Aisi, Kindal, Mami, Mafia and Lanja. However, the common identity of the Lanja Saora is expressed in their lineage 'Birada' or 'Kheja' organisation, in religious beliefs and rituals such as, participating in the worship of common spirits and ghosts, and in their pre-occupation with supernaturalism pervading the social and economic life. The second section consists of the endogamous groups of Saora like, Jurei, Jara, Jati, Bima, Sarda, Mala, Sunapania who are in different stages of Hinduization. The groups take on the appellation of 'Sudha Sabara' exhibiting, in degrees, certain cultural features of Hindu castes. Despite the divisions, their identity is marked by excluding the Lanja Saora in matters of marital and communal relations. Further the identity is expressed in having the social organisations, similar to the caste-councils, for regulation of social life along the line of local Hindu castes. The third section, Christian Saora, is drawn from different groups of Saora. The adoption of new religion has segregated them from other two sections and other local castes. But the Christian Saora are not a homogeneous group, what they are supposed to be under the Christianity. The groups observe lineage (Birada) exogamy, hold their group identity under the Christian section, congregate under separate church establishment in order to isolate their ethnic identity as distinct from that of the Para Christians.

Summing up in a most general way, the Saora community of the 'Saora Land', is not homogeneous tribe, on the levels of cultural autonomy, economy, literacy, goal orientation and holding uniform attitude towards the 'outside world' and the sponsored development. On the levels of economy the Lanja Saora are more backward than the other two sections of Saora. In agricultural adaptations, the Christian Saora have more progressive attitude than the 'Sudha Sabara'. The incidence of literacy is more, in the varying degrees, in the last two sections than the Lanja Saora. On the basis of such cultural differentials; an attempt is made to project and describe their conception of good life, happy life, prosperous life and of development.

1. Lanja Saora

The Lanja Saora hardly make any attempt at the critical assessment of the usefulness of

customary practices and beliefs which are thought to have been shared from generations. To them, no good life is possible or should exist beyond the norms, which have established stable social relations and have been instrumental for appropriate interactions among themselves and with members of other social categories.

The Lanja Saora consider it to be good life when they do not evade "UKKA" (customs in vogue) and commit 'Esi' (actions causing wrath of the god or the supernatural powers)¹. Elwin has described that 'Esi' includes incest and breaches of religious norms. The fear of 'Esi' encourages the strict adherence to the socio-religious practices, so that the spirits and ghosts would not cause diseases, epidemics, cattle-diseases, crop-diseases, truancy of rainfall and so forth. The 'Buya' (priest) and the 'Beju' (Shaman) are the intermediaries, between the individuals and such unseen powers, who by dint of their professional lore are capable of ensuring good life. The intermediaries, also, conceive of having familial relationship with their tutelaries of opposite sex in the underworld. Each of the intermediaries interprets and translates the desires and activities of the spirits with the help of his/her tutelary. The supernatural powers are supposed to take active interest in human affairs. The key to good life is to know, in advance, the cosies of the men gods and spirits and their social conditions in the underworld and are to be invited together for participation in the social gatherings and functions.

On the otherhand, the 'Ulka' or the patterned behaviour regulates individual conduct and its violation is punished by the authority of their community. The breaches of 'Ulka' include telling lies, stealing, commitment of adultery, non-repayment of debt, forcible occupation of swidden that had been cleared by another individual, not living with one's wife at the 'Bagad' (patch of shifting cultivation) for certain period of the year, non-return of gifts and such other things. The Lanja, however, in the changing situations, would not go against the 'Ulka' at any cost, although the formal authority inflicting punishment in the breaches of 'Ulka' is weak. In the Lanja society, there are also no formal socio-political institutions to restrain the individuals from resorting to deviant modes of behaviour.

The religious functionaries are expected to observe 'Ukka' even more rigorously. These functionaries commit 'Esi' by violating 'Ukka' and this has severe social consequences, as they arouse the wrath of their tutelary deities. The wrath of tutelary spirits would culminate in causing crop failure, scanty rain, more diseases, epidemics and all conceivable catastrophes. The maladies so caused are meant for wiping out the community.

The consequences of the breach of norms and commitment of 'Esi' are far-reaching to the extent of wider extensions and the community consensus does not appreciate such type of antisocial behaviour. They threaten their social stability enmasse. The customary and patterned behaviour, the social behaviour in confirmation to the 'Ukka' have made their tribal system a living one through generations, isolating them from their neighbours. As such, 'Ukka' and 'Esi' constitute their moral values. These are the guidelines for leading good life in Lanjia society. Further, the oral traditions lack precise formulation of their social code of conduct. There is no society where the individuals are left to make moral choices without referring to social prescriptions which vary in range and rigidity. No Lanjia Saora would lose sight of those two lighthouses—'Ukka' and 'Esi'—the guidelines for good and happy life. The 'Ukka' and 'Esi' would explain the way the Lanjia Saora evince an ambivalent evaluation of moral and good life in the changing situations.

The principles of social life and moral life of the Lanjiasaora are partly derived from the geography and ecology of the Agency terrain where they live in small villages which are mostly on hill slopes. The main-stay of their life is swidden cultivation ('Bagada' or 'Angwal') and terrace cultivation. Generally, they lease out the wetland, and terrace suitable for paddy cultivation. The swiddens occupy a significant place in Lanjia Saora socio-economic life. From swiddens they harvest 16 or more types of crops like paddy, oilseeds, vegetables, pulses, green leaves and a variety of fibres for home-use and the surplus, if any, is exchanged. The types of crops and the cropping-pattern are so associated with their economic life that the principal meal for six months are obtained from this source. It is the

place of spending their time with family and lineage members, of negotiating for betrothal and of worshipping Gods and spirits for the wellbeing of the individual and the community. The Lanjia Saora shift their habitation temporarily (from June-July to January-February) from the village to 'Bagada'. They live there with their family members till the harvesting of all crops are over. The 'Bagades' are prepared in such a way that the lineage members occupy the neighbouring patches. Such type of habitation gives an idea that the Lanjia Saora lineages are concentrated in the hill-slope villages from February to June and scattered over an wider area of swiddens from July to January. It seems as if the villages with their polygynous families are flown over the hill-tops, hill brows and hill-slopes where the preparation of swiddens are possible. The swidden accommodates their polygynous families scattered over during these months. In view of the importance of swiddens in Lanjia Saora life, the practice of shifting cultivation not only provides them the type of cereals, vegetables and green leaves for their food, but it inculcates a form of social life embedded in their economic and other social institutions.

The comparative absence of specialization and consequently of the division of labour (other than age and sex) has made them more dependent on their kin members economically and socially. The extensive agricultural operations in swiddens require a number of labourers at a time for the purpose of clearing, dibbling, weeding ('Gubulay') harvesting and carrying the produce to the village. As such, the demand of labour, outside their community, must be met by payment to which the poor Lanjia Saora shirk for monetary transactions in exchange of labour. Rather, labour-exchange has been institutionalised and differently been patterned in their society. The 'Ansir' (age-grade labour organisation), 'Snyom' (help to kins and bond-friends) or 'Ganidi' (without expecting in return), 'Jirji Badi' (crop-wage) 'Danadi' (timely help to labour to the consanguineal and affinal kins expecting some in return), 'Kudadi' (labour exchange between two families), 'Copatang' (the families co-operate in turn taking cattle to forest for grazing) and some other are the age-grade labour organisations and voluntary labour associations. These are at the base of helpfulness, generosity, amiable temper, co-operative attitudes and other dimensions of Lanjia Saora social life. Such social attitudes are extended to the extent of the fact that when other members of

his lineage are starving, storing of food is socially ostracised. The Lanja society is unstratified or egalitarian in that sense of equidistribution of economic benefits, especially in food materials. Helpfulness and generosity in Lanja society follow from some of the independent and other social variables, such as typical variety of crops are produced from the soil-type in the agencies; resource and produce cannot be changed to a great extent in the existing conditions. Irregularity of monsoon causes crop failure, irregularity of good crops and estimated harvesting of the seasonal nature of the produce in addition to the channels for transportation fetch them irregular income. The nature of the utilization of the produce by the community and its size, and the limit of social interaction with other ethnic categories; contribute to the factors of upholding the lineage solidarity and ethnic cohesiveness.

They uphold a very high morale of economics; that the economic advantage at the expense of his lineage or community members is against the social norms. Violation of such norms, progressively reduces the individual's social wellbeing, and consequently the individual cannot make capital for happy life out of it. The social arrangements for property relations and its inheritance in Lanja Society, put a strong brake against the economic individualism. All landed property jointly owned are termed as 'matam'. The landed property like swiddens, and terrace fields are inherited and distributed jointly. As such there are 'Kheja matam' (swiddens and terrace fields inherited by the lineage members), 'Joju matam' (common inheritance from the lineages of great and great grand-fathers), 'Safal matam' (swiddens and terrace fields are created by joint labour), 'Sagu Chasha' (joint claim over the income from matams). The group solidarity and social cohesion of the Lanja Saora society is further expressed in holding the property of 'Garajang Andruku' (village ownership). The members of different lineages and religious groups living in the village have the claim of joint ownership and inheritance of the property of 'Garajang Andruku'. As an agricultural community, the property relations in the Lanja society are the major concerns and have been variously expressed in their social life of lineage identity and village unity. There are reasons for standing against the conclusion that the lineage members of Lanja society remember and recognise the ancestors till 5 or 6 generations after

which the social principles of lineage or 'Kheja' exogamy, thin out. The amorphous character of Lanja Saora society is assumed from the fact that the Lanja Saora migrate very often from one locality to another terrain in search of fresh swiddens. But the property relations and the equi-distribution of income from the 'matam' sources among all the lineage members, however they live in distinct places, cement the band of 'Kheja' or 'Birinda' continuum. The social solidarity of Lanja Saora is in no way weaker than the tribal peoples having centralized political organisation for regulation of their cultural and social autonomy.

The Lanja Socio-Cultural life is very close to the pantheon of supernaturalism so much so that their daily activities are believed to be regulated and controlled by the spirits, shades and dead ancestors. They exert heavy pressure on Lanja pulse. Without their support the Lanja are withdrawn from the sources of happy life. The ghosts, spirits and ancestors are supposed to partake of the items of Lanja happy life. In this sense the Lanja try to widen the gap between their natural and supernatural world by means of sacrifices, offerings, appeasing them by fulfilling their demands and by other methods announced by the suitable intermediaries between them and the belief in supernatural powers. The villages and local areas are supposed to be protected from the spirits, other than their own. 'Saheeb Sum' (foreign god) in the form of wooden idol are worshipped to drive away the alien spirits. In the months of March to May, the Lanja are seen busy in using up the little excess of their produce after paying off the old debts. In no case, the pending demands of the Gods should be deferred. The months are remembered with and awaited for good food, excessive liquor-drinking, dancing, laxity of sex on the festive occasions, frequent visit to the markets or shandies in the plea of purchasing or disposing of the produce. The occasions are often associated with the religious purposes to secure the family members free from diseases, to celebrate regular festivals of *Kandul Nua*, (first eating of *Kandula*, a pulse), *Amba Nua* (first eating of mango), *Karja* and *Gur* (death anniversary of ancestors), *Jamai purpur* (seed worship) and other individual and lineage worship in the village and swiddens. The occasions are marked with the regular features of drinking, dancing, eating along with the village members, lineage members and members of other villages. There is hardly any feast limited to the

participation of an individual, or members of a family. Merry-making is a part of the religious activities: the tutelary spirits, spirits those guarding individual and village well-being are supposed to participate in the merry-making. There are occasions where the 'gramadevi' (village deity), Sahasb Sum (foreign gods), Jhale (a god for village and individual welfare) Barsum (hill god) *Ravatum* (the spirits of rituals supposed to have lived in the hills) and a good number of gods are worshipped to do away with the bad omens. In other words, the happy life for Lanja is to enjoy disease-free body for himself, for his family members and for the members of his community. To them the happy life would only be ensured by the supernatural powers if they are properly pleased.

The Lanja Saora are very fond of children. They do not think the female children to be a liability, rather they are considered as assets to his household and agricultural works. They become happy if they see their children are disease-free. They would go to any length to the extent of mortgaging the crops standing in fields and other properties to meet the expenses of curing their ailing children and forgetting over barrenness. No Lanja divorces or think of second marriage if only female children are born to the first wife. One of the considerations for marriage and for polygynous families might be to have more children and more women for more acquisition of swiddens. It would be hasty to count that polygyny and shifting cultivation are positively correlated.

The happy life in the perspective of material enjoyment like food and dress varies on the basis of age and sex in their society. The younger generations are more sensitive to the fashionable dress and house with two rooms than the older generations. Besides, the younger generation do not feel to change the older pattern of arrangements of materials in the houses. The Lanja Saora gods enclosed in pots are hung down from the roof, neither of the generations raises objection to the indoor-sacrifices of animals for curing of diseases or fulfilling the promises made for the gods. In spite of age, the members of own village or of other villages together enjoy the feasts with the presence of their lineage and affinal members on the occasions of curing of diseases, driving out the bad spirits, propitiating the dead ancestors or taking of positive steps for village

wellbeing for the next year. On the day of feast, the whole village including the children and the penos (untouchable Harijans) living near the village seem to be busy in connection with the occasion. None go for other works. They enjoy the day with food, drink, dance in the presence of their respective age-grades. The months from January to June there is hardly a week when there would be no feast in the village. The months from July-November-January are dull seasons for congregational feasts, although there are plenty of individual worships in the swiddens or terrace fields.

The Lanja Saora think themselves to be prosperous, when they adequately meet the religious demands amidst their relatives and friends, and help them, in return, on those occasions. Nothing tortures the Lanja Saora then to be idle during the seasons of swidden and terrace cultivation. They hardly take interest in the daily wages, nor, prefer to take reference from the neighbouring communities in connection with their economic life. The purpose of attainment of material prosperity cannot be totally ruled out, but such achievements are in conjunction with religious beliefs, ritual for spirits of dead ancestors, 'Snayum' 'Matam' and such other social organisations and gatherings where the spirits of the communal solidarity is dominant. To them, the material prosperity should be shared with other members of the community. The prosperity to them should be displayed by entertaining the community and lineage members with good feasts, drinks on the religious and marriage occasions. A Lanja becomes prosperous and moves up in the scale of social positions, when he has a number of wives and swiddens; and if he has meticulously fulfilled all the demands of the gods and ancestors by sacrificing animals and holding feasts.

II. Sugha Sabaras

This section of Saora is found in different stages of socio-religious integration with the neighbouring Hindu Society. The process can be viewed from two points of social behaviour leading towards the common goal to secure a social position in the caste hierarchy or towards leading a Hindu way of life. The process of alienation from their primitive brethren in connection with the manifested behaviour of magico-

religious and social activities, is almost obvious to the outsiders. The section is very much conscious of the existing segregation between themselves and the Lanja Saora in matters of settlement pattern, in swidden cultivation, in dress, in matters of food habit, in speaking language, in social relations mainly of marital and commensality. They usually settle in plains land or 'pader' around which the land gradually slopes down towards a water course. Plains-land around the village is suitable for harvesting ragi, mustard, til, blackgram, horsegram, arhar of country variety 'Kanduli' and other pulses and cereals more than their family requirement. They make cash out of it. They do not practise shifting cultivation because it is the mainstay of the Lanja Saora, and it is associated with their way of life. In the consideration of the Hindus it is inferior type of cultivation which fetches low social prestige. It is below the dignity of Hindu peasantry. The groups of Sarda, Jati, Jara and some of Jurel Sabara also practise swidden cultivation as a source of additional income or a source of earning cash. Lanja are known for their peculiar dress of long and narrow loin cloth having a long tail like flap hanging down across the waist at the back. Their women put on a black skirt or 'Beda' around their waist leaving the upper part of the body bare. The Sudha Sabara show a contrast in dress and put on the dresses similar to the neighbouring Hindus and the untouchables. The language of Sudha Sabara is not completely free from the chaste Saora language with the accents. Whereas, the Sunapenia group speak local oriya with some peculiar accents. The Sudha Sabaras adhere to the types of food they should take, as prescribed by their respective group councils 'Kula mala'. The 'Kula mala', in their respective meetings, restrict the commensality and marital relations with the primitive groups of Saora and the deviants are fined and punished. The significant function of the 'Kulamela' is to keep records of their group principles and to add or to drop out the new or old principles standing in the way of upward social mobility in the region.

On the otherhand, the Sudha Sabara make an effort, to integrate and identify themselves with the Hindu caste society. The proceedings of the Kulamela which act as directives of customs and ideology of the respective groups bear the testimony of their affiliation with the wider Hindu society. The Sudha Sabaras are no more a local group. They are wide-spread

from the agency to the plains areas. As the section of the Sudha Sabar include as different endogamous groups, only 3 of them hold 'Kulamela' regularly at the interval of 2 or 3 years. They are abided by its mandatory principles, and are in a position to enforce the norms and morality of Hindu cultural life. It seems, the group are tending nearer to caste-society and are more or less influenced by the ideology of caste stratification. On the moral plane, they try to reinterpret at the level of their individual interests the conceptions of hell and heaven, belief in 'Karmaphala' purity and pollution, after-life, 'papa' and 'punya' (sin and religious record) 'Dana' and 'Dakshina', 'mokhya' (salvation) and other traits of Hinduism that would influence the social behaviour and activities of individuals in this life. The belief in conformation to the religious and social norms in this world is not only taken to be the good life, by the other Hindus, but the conformists are amply rewarded in their after-life. The highest reward in the after-life, in Sanskrit Hinduism, is taken to be the 'moksha' or salvation or merging with godhood or no birth hereafter. Of course, there is belief in gradation of celestial life depending upon the activities and good life (based on Hindu standards) led by an individual in this world. As such, the individuals spend a substantial portion of their economic possessions towards the attainment of individual good life after death. In view of securing them in the other world, the criteria of good life in this world are to earn 'punya' by giving 'Dana' (permanent parting) and 'Dakshina', (payment for such parting), by observing death and birth pollutions and by engaging Brahmins in the marriage and mortuary rites in order to make the union sacrament and to give solace to the dead respectively. Often they even desire to spend a considerable amount of their income on pilgrimages, holding feasts on the occasions of local fairs, festivals (Baliyatra, Dola, Gamha Purnima, Durgapuja 'Osha', 'brata' (religious fastings) and on other occasions coming under Hindu calendrical year. As the social relations are extended beyond the lineage and local groups to the Hindu neighbours the investment is often made in securing the ritual services of the barber, the washerman and the Brahmin. Besides the religious norms, the social norms of Hindu life, though cannot be separated from it, are equally rigid to gain the appreciation of good life. It includes the marriage within the group, restriction on movement of women, desire to procure male children for continuing

the 'varsha' (lineage) and getting 'pinda' (religious offering of rice-balls to the ancestors), restrictions on interlining, obligation to entertain the territorial members of 'Khandas' (regional group) on the occasions of expletions of cow-killing, of 'patak' (worms in wounds) and of such others which are believed to seal the doors of heaven for the victims in their after-life. The Sudha Sabara make investments on these several ritualistic occasions to earn good life not only in their earthly life but also in the after-life.

The Sudha Sabara are economically better off than the Lanja Saora. The natural resources are manipulated to the extent of wet cultivation, horticulture, intensive cultivation, growing more cash crops, getting income from the petty-job works. It incites them to search for new avenues of income which are prestigious in the views of Hindu neighbours. The Sudha Sabara, out of their scanty income cherish to have two-roomed houses with a courtyard inside and wide verandah in front of the house. Following the Hindu model of house plan, village plan and plan for the installation of deities, they seek for out houses, linear arrangement of houses in rows, and temples at the two sides of the village. The verandah and the house are considered to be ritually pure for the fact that every Hindu house is a temple and should not be polluted by possession of materials considered ritually impure. The household members must not do away with by sprinkling emulsion, transplanting Tulsi plant (occimum sanctum) in front of the house and by preserving oblations of the great god, like Shiva, Jagannath, Thekurani and other Hindu gods. The household members must not override the decisions of the eldest males and females; and the females should follow the dictates of the males. They consider those to be happy familial life which ensure them caste-endogamy, abhorrence from extra marital relations and obedience of females to males and children to their parents.

Both younger and older generations are not so casual about dresses. To them, the dress not only is a requirement for the body but it has its own prestige symbol before the neighbours and outsiders. Without it, one is not more than a Lanja Saora. Even living in the same house, the older members do not object to the fashionable dress put on by the younger ones. They also take delight in taking good food like mutton, fish and liquor, although these are not the bases of good Hindu life. The last item is

virtually in conflict with the local Hindu customs whereas the other two items of food are not objected by the local Hindus. The 'Kulamela' prohibits ideally, the use of liquor in any form. But in actuality in each and every 'Kula' feast and who feasts on the occasions of marriage, death and festivals, liquor is used lavishly as an item that takes the merriment to climax. The females also participate in drinking liquor on such occasions. The social norms are, on some occasions, evaded for happiness at individual and group level.

Acquisition of land (Padar and Jobs), storing of paddy and saving of money in the form of hard cash are the few selected criteria of prestigious position in local hierarchy. The growing trend among the Sudha Sabara is to engage agricultural labourers, to entertain the Government Officials on tour and to participate in the local politics which are being emulated prestige as it is in vogue with the local Hindu castes. Irrespective of their economic status positions they cherish to have in fact, the resources that raise their social status to the level of the local Khendayats or the paikas, who do not conform to the textual varna model. They do not lose any opportunity to extend their interpersonal relationship with the local Gouds (Cattle herders) and the Paikas. The latter caste is known to have historically associated with the Muthadars, the heads of Muthos (definite tracts of agency areas). The individual Sudha Sabara would prefer the caste-based social status to individual economic well-being. They tend to merge their identity with the Hindu peasants by taking up the practice of plain-land cultivation and orchards (orange and banana) which are the caste-free occupations.

At the group level, efforts are being made to remain alert to the organisation of local festivals and to hold meetings of 'Kulamela' and their sizeable participation in it. The acquisition of social prestige in the local hierarchy is not an individual mobility rather it is a group concern. Similarly at the individual level, the concern is to acquire landed property, to maintain the life of a peasant austerity and to participate at the helm of Government affairs. The Sudha Sabara make possible efforts to take the local leadership in agricultural innovations and in making success the regional festivals of 'Belijatra' and 'Manikaswari' and in showing active interest in the tectotalism in having monogamous form of

marriage, in accepting hypergamy and in having 'Jatipench'. Besides that, they expose their knowledge ability in Keeping abreast of the stories from the epics, in describing the experiences, and of their sacred visits and pilgrimages, in conceiving dreams about the after-life in the other world and in trying to quote them before other local castes and categories (for the purpose of emphasizing their segregation from the Lanja Saora. To them, achievements in these sectors of social life are the indication of prosperous life. Naturally, they hope for such designs of Hindu pleasant way of livings which ensure them happy and prosperous life.

III. The Christian Saora

The conversion of Saora into christianity lacks self-motivations and complete change of belief; rather it may be described as lineage-conversion and village-conversion. The data show that the majority cases of conversion have economic profit behind them. Conversion of 'Kheja' members is in most cases, followed by the conversion of lineage or village-head. Besides the influential and village-heads, the agents of mission persuade the individuals to change their religious faith into christianity.

At the instance when the Saora fail to cure some of the endemic diseases or long-ailments the missionary agents come to their rescue. Taking this opportunity the later persuade them to forsake their belief on their age-old practice of worshipping spirits and dead ancestors for a cure. The agents of mission cure them by applying medicines getting in return from them a promise of conversion after the cure. In view of such conversions by the simplicity of words, they continue to show reverence to their primitive social and religious beliefs and rituals in matters of drinking of liquor, offering liquor to the respective gods in swiddens, public dancing, lineage exogamy, easy divorce, attending and observing the death feasts, marriage feasts, village feasts of 'Jhala' dance, 'Jamalpur', 'Ambarus', 'Kandula', 'Nuaf' and other traditional festivals, which are contrary to the christian practices. Of course, the venue is the premises of the churches. They also, stick to the broad principles of christianity that observing 'X' mas, congregational worship, monogamy, weekly attendance of church, and discarding the worship or giving habitation to their traditional gods in their houses and 'Ikons'.

The good life to them, is to live in obedience to the principles of church-life or 'mandali' (limit of subdivisions of Roman and Catholic Church organisations in this area). The traditional worship of different gods in the old Lanja Saora pantheon has been summarised to one god, the Lord Jesus, and he is prayed on different occasions to make them free from the clutches of 'Satan', a synthesised name of all evil spirits, ghosts and gods under the traditional order. They are more or less free from the belief in the existence of 'underworld' or 'otherworld' where the present life is regarded or condemned after death. Rather, the good life to them is in conformity with the socio-religious norms, humanitarianism, helpfulness, co-operation these are demanded by their traditional solidarity and group cohesion.

The happy life, to the christian Saoras, is the enjoyment of present life with the available materials or derived materials. It is of individualistic enjoyment. Although they live with Lanja Saora in the same village or in the village of their own, the house pattern and the material possession of the household is somewhat different in arrangement, in neatness, in constructing additional room and separate kitchen, etc. The Lanja Saora observe restriction for certain items of food, but the christian Saora enjoy eating of food that is locally prohibited to other sections of the Saora tribe. In matters of dress, the newly converts of interior area of Kerdang (under Nuagada block) put on Lanja Saora dress of loin cloth 'Katcha' and skirt 'Beda'. The meriment in feasts, extramarital relations, enjoying good health and disease-free familial life are the individual happy life which they have borrowed from the western values of Christianity.

To the Christian Saora, the prosperity of life is the acquisition of land, money and social status which should be invested for further promotion of life in this world. They invest labour and money for cultivation of high yielding variety of paddy during the months of January to May. They hire land from the Lanja Saora and Sudha Sabara for this purpose. They avail the state concessions of subsidy for different schemes granted by different financing agencies. The younger generations are very active in gaining economic benefits, even to the extent of partially replacing the Para as the intermediaries and

traditional exploiters. The adoption of new religion and the social actions oriented towards such life, help them to march towards the prosperity.

Summing up, the direction of change or social transformation of the Saora Society is not in accordance with the scheme of sponsored development. The planners conceive the social change based on the change of traditional economic relations which would result in (a) more money income of individual families from the source of higher production of monocrop or cash crop, (b) appreciation of further investment for profit and investment, (c) minimum standard of food, housing and education, (d) utilisation of time for economic benefit through fuller employment, and above all, the individual families are to get such economic benefits. The programmes are sponsored by different specialised agencies to produce better and abrupt results. To name a few of such methods of the sponsoring development are different government agencies like the ITDA, the Co-operative Department, the Central Government assistance scheme, the CARE feeding and others. The successful cases are discontinued leaving the tribe to take further initiative in such organisations, and, the failure cases are not deeply thought of, instead, are usually reinterpreted under a new name.

Discussions

The economic interactions, in Saora tribe, should be conceived in different dimensions and are so diffused that their isolation from the whole of social relations is a myth. This is a characteristic feature of all tribal societies, especially in cases of those which are not homogenous group. Nevertheless, homogeneity in the matters of kinship, religious manifestation and value orientation derived out of such socio-religious organisations or 'Social milieu' is taken to be the base for such assessment. Man is double. He is not merely a bio-psychical being, he is also a social and cultural being. He has foundation in the organism and hence his actions are limited. As a social and cultural being his actions are collective representations tradition, codes, themes in culture. The social change as desired in the sponsored development must not ignore the social milieu or the context which their social relationships or their Socio cultural elements clustered around it.

The economic relations and interactions between the sections of Saora and between the

Saora and neighbourhood pose a complex situation when one thinks of sponsoring development in this area. The section of Sudha Sabara think themselves a separate category nearer to the caste society. They segregate themselves from the Lanja Saora and Christian Saora by limiting, in every possible way the social and economic relations. There are instances of certain case studies that the Sudha Sabara refused to avail of the financial assistance on the plea that such assistance is meant for the tribals like the Lanja Saora. There are few villages in the agency tract where Sudha Sabara live in the same hamlet with the Lanja and Christian Saora. The economic co-operation between the Lanja and Christian Saora is very intense so much so that both of the communities co-operative in cultivation of swiddens, in the diversion of water resource to the terraced fields, in sharing the produce of 'matam' and 'Garjang' 'Andrukur', sleeping in the same hut of the 'Bagader' at night, in exchanging raw-food grains, saramind, bananas, beef, in participating in communal hunting and their co-operation is emphasised in so many ways beyond the economic activities. Excepting religious isolation, to an outsider, the Christian Saora are thought to be the part of Lanja community. They share sentiment which was manifested in the recent Saora liturgies at Bhamarpur, Gumma, Nuagoda against the Christian Pans. Both the communities have less social status in the regional hierarchy in comparison to the Sudha Sabara. Besides other factors, the feeling of solidarity between the Lanja and Christian Saora opens up a new avenue that is manipulated by the later community. The differentials of economy, literacy and world view between the two communities have brought two significant changes of relations in consequence of differentials of manipulations of the sources of sponsored development that economic subordination of the former and social domination of the later over the former.

The time from January to May is a busy period for both the sections of Sudha Sabara and Lanja Saora. During this time, the Lanja Saora are to meet their 'Kheja' people on different occasions of feasts like 'Karja', 'Gur' festivals of 'Pauser', 'Kandula Nua' 'Amba Nua', sacrifices of animals

towards the fulfilment of desires of the spirits, dead ancestors and other social functions thereto. The socio-religious obligations are manifold so that they are to arrange money to meet the expenses of marriage ceremonies, the expenses of participation in feasts and repayment of gifts and sacrifices held for the security of the village, community and so on. The interesting feature is that the agricultural operations either in terraces and swiddens are taboo on such occasions of the feasts. The Lanja engage themselves, if at all, for temporary economic gain such as road construction to meet the religious or marriage expenditures. Similarly the Sudha Sabara are busy in attending the regional and local 'Kulamela' in organising the 'Baljaba' for twenty-one days, setting out for pilgrimage if possible, and holding marriages, etc. The summer period is thought by the two communities to be a recess season after agricultural operations. They desire to spend the seasons for clearing the arrear work. In contrast, the Christian Soora utilize the period for further economic gains. In this time the government agencies with their objectives and targets, try to launch their programmes in the area. The Christian Soora take full advantage of the opportunities for taking loan advanced under the schemes of dug well, of bee-keeping, of goatery, of cultivation of high yielding paddy, of orchard, of construction of road and of other development projects of the national and state Government as well. They have two objectives—development of economic status would bring social status in a wider plane, and the other is to seize exclusive and political dominance in the agency areas.

There is a series of consequences of the latter aim. Their repondarant number in the tract has made possible on their part, to occupy more of the elected seats in Gram Panchayats, Panchayat Samitis and Board of directors of different financial agencies which a readvancing loan with subsidy. The sectional imbalance of change in the Soora tribe has partially replaced the Pars as intermediary between not only the Soora and plain people, but also between different agencies of the Government. Again, the Christian Soora conceptualize the prosperity of life in the economic gain coupled with saving and investment. In fact, they acquire land by clearing forests, purchasing from the Lanja and Hindu peasants. The settlement camps are crowded with the cases of petitions for recording of land that was sold by them some years ago. There are also move-

ments and demonstrations for getting the swiddens recorded in the cultivators name, for utilisation of forest resources without interference, for cancellation of reserved forests, for getting back land from the non-tribals that was transferred 20 or 30 years back and many others that would help them to take political leadership in the region. The motive was for attainment of social prestige in secular field which would probably compensate the loss of social prestige at the local level being surrounded by the dominant Hindu neighbours.

Besides the local political leadership they try to extend to the national level. The competition for the same would be limited within the tribe as they desire. And there should be no interference in economic and political spheres from other ethnic categories other than the Soora, in their land. For this purpose they fuse their identity with the Lanja Soora as the common inhabitant of the tract and should exclude others participating in the sponsored development in the area. As such, the historical isolation is added by the political and economic isolation of the Soora land, a reserved tract for a preserved category. The direction of social transformation is otherwise, lost in the half-way, as they are not assumed by the sponsored development.

After a precise description of the Soora view of good, happy and prosperous life at the levels of individual and group, an effort is made to isolate some of the independent factors, those are in conflict with the sponsored development. In a wider plane of isolation and continuum, the features of a tribal society are the—(a) isolation in terms of subjective awareness and 'objective reality' (b) a value system of equality, (c) belief in close relations between the supernatural and man. Besides, the peasants and tribes share common demonstrators like (a) self-sufficient economics with symbiotic relations with other ethnic categories, (b) segmentary and functional lineages which are emphasised by the kinship reference and inheritance and (c) the religious pantheon is structured with a pragmatic consideration of fertility in crops and women and so many other socio-economic traits (Sinha 1969: 1965: 57: 83). In Indian context, not only the tribes are separate ethnic categories, but also they are cultural categories. It is conceived that the peasants are made out of tribal people. The process of transformation presents a scale where at different points the different style of life are located (Bailey 1950; Rodfield, 1941: 292 1953.

6:29). The typological scale further exemplifies that some tribals are loosely assimilated with the Hindu peasantry, their association tends them towards a social mobility emphasising superordination and sub-ordination pushing them beyond their lineage and local groups (1943—Ghurya, 1959—Srinivas, 1966—Mendelbaum, 1966—Bose, 1973—Mahamdar). To one's dissatisfaction the categorisation of Indian tribes in the scale has made them an amorphous. From the point of view of the national system, these intermediate and other grades of variation of tribal societies may be reduced to three types i. e., 'marginal', 'associative' and 'assimilative' (1960 Mahapatra).

The Saora can be located in the three social types of the scale, that the Lanja Saora in the 'marginal' the Christian Saora and Sudha Sabara in the associative category matching towards the assimilation with the national system and Hindu peasantry. However, the sections of the tribe are distinguished by the retention of some of the typical socio-cultural features of ideal type of tribal society. The sections can be distinguished, from each other on the basis of their encompassing the moral community, holding of cognitive value, extending the social interactions. Taking all the three bases together, the Saora react independently of the sponsored development.

First of all, the feeling of inclusiveness is the structural aspect of the Lanja Saora community which is centred around the kinship and is magnified by such segmentary lineage relations. The relations are buttressed by the economic co-operation, helpfulness, social participation and those give rise to their social solidarity and social identity. The efficient use of co-operative actions and material resources, as fore thought by the agencies of the sponsored development, time, energy tools, material environment and objectivity of social relations, have lost sight of the intrinsic goodness and moral life of primitive section of the Saora tribe. Their moral life is manifest actions and set of facts that they seek to translate in their daily life. As the sponsored development includes accumulation of individual wealth and power, it is in direct opposition to the good life of the Lanja Saora. They religiously limit the materials for their happy and prosperous life also. The Lanja Saora do not consider development beyond their lineage and local groups. The prosperous life in terms of economic individualism is not conceived at the expense of lineage solidarity and local groups.

The infrastructures of agricultural development, health and family planning programmes do not appeal to them as they are not related to their Bagada cultivation, and worshipping of the dead ancestors, tutelaries and so forth. In the sponsored developmental programmes, they do not obtain the scope for the manifest actions of good, happy and prosperous life. They do not conceive the happiness without the cultural participation of the gods and spirits in drinking liquor, in eating good food and enjoying the merriments in the presence of their kin members of this world and of the under world. Besides, their village and lineage they conceive of development of the region that they should be in the unrestrained possession of swiddens and celebration of their seasonal festivals which might express their traditional and emotional life. The assumed vertical mobility of Lanja Saora community is in fact, in conflict with their horizontal mobility, a range of movement of the homogeneous group and similar degree of intensity is in process of transfer from one relation to another and from the cultural autonomy of unspecialization to the subordination though the short-run economic prosperity is the premise.

On the otherhand, to the Sudha Sabaras and Christian Saoras, the prosperous life of economic individualism should be used for the group cohesion or attainment of solidarity lending towards the status mobility in the hierarchical order in the former case, and political leadership in the later case. The scope for full employment and utilisation of time, envisaged in the sponsored development, are conceived differently by the Saora. The Lanja Saora use the time for meeting his affinal and other relations before proceeding to the Bagada fields in the winter seasons; the Sudha Sabaras spend the time towards the individual preparation for achieving Khandayat-caste status and for the life after death. The investments are also made for the prosperous life in the other world. It seems that the Saora could not reconcile between the 'emic' view of prosperity and prosperous life with the 'etic' view of happy and prosperous life inherent in the sponsored developments.

Secondly, the agencies of the sponsored development approach the community with the specialized interests of uniplex relations to deal with the single activity. The approach of the

agencies should be reinforced with other relationships. They are accustomed with the diffused and multiplex relations. As a supplicant, whether they are agencies or tribals, the relations must be sought diffused to make them moral relations. The sponsored development programmers must not close the eyes to the fact of the Saora Society that is founded upon multiplex relationships. (It may be pointed out that the abolition of Muthadari system in the agency is not adequately replaced or provided for by the functions other than the Muthadars used to charge besides the revenue collections). The sponsored development process should be free from the thought of a routine process in which all the steps, contingencies and structural variables are manipulated. The Saora is not fully sure of their good crop and annual shortage of food although the sponsored development agencies ensure them, with every possible measure of irrigation, pesticide, stock of food grain in warehouses and spreading of TDCC fair-price shops in the area. Because, they are from two different moral communities.

Any morality presupposes an order and certain standards. The Sudha Sabara tend to wards the 'salvation religion' (Hinduism) being emulated with the sacred lore and 'sacred faith' on the one hand, and being peasants are in constant touch with the nature and more susceptible to supernatural forms on the otherhand. To them, the idea of sponsored development with all the good intentions is essentially an urban one lacking religiosity. Moreover, the idea of development of his family and lineage members is, at the first instance, to abide by the strict principles of conservatism which are contrary to the family planning programmes and

agricultural programmes. They hope to experience a style of life that is reduced to the strict minimum of need, opposed to rivalry of interest, asceticism congruent with the capitalistic attitude. To them, the development of the region should confer opportunity to acquire a social status equated with the social status of Khandayats (a militia class) in the regional hierarchy of a caste society.

The social change, in the form of exogenous social movement in the scheduled tribal areas, aiming to reinforce productivity and economic betterment presuppose, the 'spacio-temporal perspective', 'objectivity' and 'inside view' of the Saora cultures. The matrix of responses to the sponsored development in different sections of the great tribe of Saora is roughly delineated : that the primitive section of Larjia elite section of Christian Saoras tend to crystallize the feeling of 'subnationalism' perpetuating the 'selected aspects of their culture'. On the otherhand, the Hinduized groups Sudha Sabaras offer the tenets, 'emulation-solidarity conflict' because of the differentials of emulations or Hinduization. The similar assumptions are proved in a most general way that :

- (1) the economic opportunities made available to visual groups should permit a broad base and should be ahead of the political opportunities,
- (2) "and if political and other privileges are withdrawn in the near future, there is even a greater possibility of increasing the forces of solidarity of tribesmen qua tribesmen in India of the future".

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Health Problems of Primitive Tribal Communities of Orissa

—Dr. Almas Ali

The preamble of the charter of the World Health Organisation attempts to define Health as "a State of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity". Therefore health cannot be viewed in isolation from the overall goals and policies of National Development.

One of the commitments that the Nation had undertaken at its independence was the provision of basic health services to all its people. Health of the urban communities in India has been well-cared for by the provision of various types of medical facilities in the cities and towns. For the people in the rural areas ambitious health programmes have been launched by the Government. A number of experiments had been carried out in villages at various centres using different types of health workers. But for the tribals which constitute 6-94 percent of the country's total population no serious attempt has been made to improve their health condition. More than 12 percent of the total tribal population of the country is found in Orissa.

Today tribal development is highly challenging and at the same time a very difficult process. The development of tribal people is possible only when the health of the tribals is sound and ideal. Health care therefore cannot be visualised in isolation and has to be linked with the overall development of the tribal villages. While developing comprehensive models, efforts should be made to have multi-disciplinary approach which should include health care, provision of safe drinking water, cheaper scientific methods for disposal of excreta,

drainage system, etc. All these attributes have a direct impact on the health status of the tribal people. Orissa occupies a unique position in the tribal map of India and has the second largest tribal population among the States of the country. It has been the epitome of 62 tribes numbering over 5 million constituting 23.11 per cent of the State's total population of about 22 million, according to the census of 1971. The tribes of Orissa are not of one uniform compact mass and they present a wide linguistic, ethnic and cultural variety being in various stages of development-economically, educationally and culturally. Because of these striking differences in their levels of development and in view of the vast diversity of the socio-economic situation in different tribal areas what holds good in one case need not necessarily suit in other cases and therefore any formula approach for health care is not only unsuitable but unthinkable.

Unfortunately the primitive tribes of Orissa have relatively little or no access to even the most elementary form of health care. Tragically enough, they are the very people who are in utmost need of health care because they are the most vulnerable to disease and have high degree of morbidity and malnutrition.

Comprehensive studies pertaining to health and nutritional status among primitive tribes of Orissa are very scanty. Data necessary for an evaluation of health, nutrition and genetic problems among these tribal communities are inadequate and often completely lacking and therefore very little or nothing is known about

these and correlated aspects of the primitive tribal groups. Hence the health problems faced by most of the primitive tribes are yet to be identified and health and nutritional status to be assessed.

There is almost total lack of research into what are the actual health needs of the people. Because of this lacuna the health programme for tribal areas have been developed either intuitively or by adopting some models of health care programmes which have been successful somewhere in an altogether different geographical, ecological and socio-economic background. Thus these models are poor imitations, which are not suited for tribal areas of Orissa. Moreover lack of basic epidemiological data in tribal areas makes it even more difficult to effect a rational allocation of limited resources which are available for health care.

The tribal groups living in different ecosystem face health, genetic and nutrition problems of varying nature. Due to lack of appropriate and dependable data there is a greater need for establishing a profile of health and nutrition problems of each tribal group in the context of microsituation which can provide basic epidemiological data on frequency and distribution of different diseases (including nutritional deficiencies, genetic disorders, communicable diseases, etc.).

There has been in recent years considerable developmental inputs for the upliftment of tribal population. Therefore we felt the immediate need to undertake a comprehensive study to assess the health and nutritional status of the primitive tribes of Orissa in the context of overall development of tribal population. The informations obtained on these aspects would not only help in the planning of activities to meet their needs but action-oriented health programmes with problem solving and result-oriented approach could be adopted so that effective measures could be taken in order to improve their health and nutritional status depending upon the recommendations emerging out of the present study.

Thus a beginning was made among two of the primitive tribes of Orissa namely Kutia-Kondhs and Pauri Bhuinys of Phulbani and Sundargarh district respectively, where intensive studies to assess the health and nutritional status was taken up with a view to extending such studies among other tribes of the State at a later date.

Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the health status, and disease profile of Kutia-Kondhs and Pauri Bhuinys and factors which determine them;
2. To find out their dietary habits and assess the extent of malnutrition among them.
3. To study the special health hazards viz: genetic diseases afflicting these tribal population.
4. To get an insight of their belief system regarding diseases and their traditional methods of treatment.
5. To formulate action-oriented programmes and provide suitable services to meet their health and nutrition need and
6. To assist the Government in the implementation of the recommendations emerging out of such studies and in the long run to evaluate periodically the impact of these measures on health and nutritional status of these tribal population.

Target population and Coverage

Target population—To begin with, two of the primitive tribes have been taken up for the study they are the Kutia-Kondhs of Phulbani district and Pauri Bhuinys of Sundargarh district. Kutia-Kondhs are a primitive section of the great Kondh tribe which was once noted for its horrid practices of human sacrifice and female infanticide. The Pauri Bhuinys or Hill Bhuinys are a primitive section of the Bhuinya Tribe. Both the Kutia-Kondhs and Pauri Bhuinys are even today away from the pale of civilisation in mountain fastnesses and lead a life of squalor, poverty and misery.

Coverage

Two villages viz: Burlubaru inhabited by Kutia-Kondhs and Jaldih inhabited by Pauri Bhuinys were studied. The village of Burlubaru lies at a distance of about 1½ kms. from Belghar Police-Station on the Ambodola-Belghar road in Tumudibandh block of Phulbani district. It is situated at a height of about 2,250 ft. above sea level and lies roughly on 19°47'-N latitude and 83°44'-E longitude, on the north-east fringe of the eastern ghat. This village is practically cut off from all sides by a series of hill ranges and underdeveloped communication system. The village of Jaldih lies at a distance of about 8 Kms. from Koina, in the hilly area of Bonal Sub-division of Sundargarh district. The village is completely isolated and

inaccessible, situated at a height of about 2800 ft. above sea-level and lies roughly on 21°15'-N latitude and 85°30'-E longitude on an open table land on a hill-top of Malayagiri mountain range.

Methodology

Health and nutrition survey: Health and Nutritional status of both the villages was assessed through clinical examination, nutrition survey and laboratory investigations. The overall nutritional appearance of each case was appraised to find out whether a person is grossly underweight or has generalised skin lesion or other indications of unsatisfactory health, possibly due to nutritional imbalance. Changes in hair, eyes, skin, neck, mouth, teeth, knee and ankle, jerk reflexes, oedema of lower extremities suggesting possible nutritional deficiency were evaluated. Consumption of food was assessed by taking up a diet survey in which weight of raw uncooked food articles was taken twice daily for seven consecutive days in four selected households.

Data on hygiene, sanitation, religious beliefs about health practices, traditional methods of treatment, present health condition and health facilities and medical care available in the village were collected by observation and by interviewing people of the village.

Haematological investigations with special reference to genetic diseases such as sickle-cell disease and red-cell enzyme deficiency (G-6-PD) were carried out with the help of following methods:—

- (i) For detection of sickle-cell disease the simple sickling test was conducted using sodium-meta-bisulphate.
- (ii) For detection of G-6-PD deficiency Breinstin's method was adopted using 2,6 Dichloro-Phenol Indophenol and Phenacine-methosulphate.
- (iii) For detection of malarial parasite thick and thin blood films were taken and examined.

Major findings

From the present study the following health problems have emerged. In the matter of health and sanitation both the Kutia-Kondhs and the Pauri Bhuiyias are very backward and primitive. Their knowledge regarding health and nutrition is rudimentary. Their isolation and backwardness and their faith and reliance on the traditional medico-religious methods are the

main reasons for the low degree of awareness about modern medical practices. Other factors which attribute to poor health are the lack of environmental sanitation, personal hygiene, poor living condition, including improper ventilation and the like. Our study revealed that many of the recognised threats to health like diarrhoea, upper respiratory tract infections, malnutrition, worm infestations, etc., which were common among Kutia-Kondhs and Pauri Bhuiyias are preventable. Therefore an effective programme of preventive medical care can be taken up. In the existing health care system in these tribal areas not much emphasis is given to preventive and promotive aspect, main bias being on curative side. So there is need to revise the priorities in tribal areas. Therefore preventive and promotive health and nutrition should be given the top priority. Preventive public health measures can make great headway in improving the level of health in these area.

There is also need of feeding back the necessary informations and important facts brought to light through our health survey regarding their disease, deficiencies and alarming situation of their health. One of the most significant observations that has emerged from these studies relates to the high incidence of a genetic disorder, i.e., the deficiency of red-cell enzyme Glucose-6-Phosphate dehydrogenase (G-6-PD) among the Kutia-Kondhs. The incidence of sickle-cell disease was also quite high. Malaria was very common in Belghar area among Kutias. Presumably the hilly areas of Belghar are hyperendemic for malarial infection (*P. falciparum*). Kutia-Kondhs may have been possibly exposed to malarial infection for the last several hundreds of years and as a result such mutation might have occurred in them. The heterozygous advantage in affording protection against malaria, particularly against plasmodium falciparum is known and this possibly must be the genesis of such a high incidence of sickle-cell disease and G-6-PD deficiency. Other side of the problem is more alarming. While eradicating malaria the role of G-6-PD deficiency should be given due emphasis. Administration of antimalarial drugs like Primaquine to persons deficient in G-6-PD enzyme produces hemolysis, causes severe health hazards and sometimes this may be even fatal. So instead of saving them from the grip of malaria we can do great harm by giving antimalarial drugs. Therefore, the medical and paramedical personnel operating in these tribal areas should be aware of this fact.

Therefore studies of Haemoglobinopathies including sickle-cell gene and of G-6-PD deficiency is of paramount importance as it is presumed that many tribal communities live in hyperendemic zones of malaria (*P. falciparum*) and this gene often co-exists in the same population. It, thus poses an added health problems when care is needed not to use the antimalarial drugs in an indiscriminate manner.

It was also found that the water of the hill streams of Burlabaru area which the Kutia-Kondas use for drinking and cooking purposes contained graphite. The Kutias complain about indigestion and irritation in stomach often. These troubles may be due to graphite content in water. Incidence of leprosy was found to be very high in nearby Kutia-Kondh village, Rangapur. They are not secluded from their society and live in close contact with family members. The study also indicated a high incidence of tuberculosis among the Kutias. Low blood pressure was found to be very common and not a single case of hypertension was recorded. This may be attributed to their low salt culture.

Among the Pauri Bhuiyias genetic diseases such as sickle-cell disease and G-6-PD deficiency was absent among the surveyed population. The incidence of malaria was comparatively less. Gastro-intestinal tract disease were of common occurrence and frequency of dysentery and diarrhoea was high among Pauri Bhuiyias. The other major diseases prevalent were those of the respiratory system, ENT group of diseases, worm infestation, influenza and skin diseases.

The common diseases seen in the present civilization, like atherosclerosis, diabetes, cancer and other types of cardiovascular and cerebro-vascular diseases are rare in both the primitive tribes.

The level of nutrition in these area is unquestionably low. The disruption of the ecological balance has adversely affected their nutritional status. Slash and burn type of cultivation results in considerable degradation and shrinkage of forests. The disappearance of wild life have in turn deprived them of their traditional source of protein. The change in vegetation pattern of the area, as well as the new usages of minor products of forests, lack of method of preservation, believe system concerning established food habit, coupled with poverty, illiteracy, superstitions and ignorance have adversely affected the diet of the tribals leading to mal-nutrition.

Among the health hazards present in both these tribal areas nutritional diseases occupied a unique place. High incidence of frank nutritional deficiency was present specially among the vulnerable segment of population, infants, children, pregnant women and nursing mothers. Vitamin A deficiency was evidenced by the described signs of Bitot's spots, Keratomalacia and in some cases the symptoms of night blindness. Numbness and tingling of the hands and feet due to Vit B deficiency was very common complaint and many children had angular stomatitis. For every case of frank nutritional deficiency there were several cases of sub-clinical or "twilight" zone of malnutrition in these areas. The relationship between malnutrition is in one hand and infection as well as worm infestation on the other is two-fold. Infection and worm infestation lower the nutritional status, therefore widen the gap of deficiency and aggravate malnutrition. Malnutrition coupled with lowering resistance makes the child more vulnerable to infection. Among most of the tribal children who die early of gastro-intestinal and respiratory infections, the real cause of death is the underlying malnutrition. The infection merely acts like the last straw.

The diet survey indicated that their diet is deficient in both quality and quantity as compared to the accepted standard. Even the basic caloric requirements are not met, let alone other dietary components.

Nutritional needs should be solved by the community itself through a better utilisation of its own resources i.e., locally available, cheap but nutritious food. Specific objective should therefore be to test at the village level how locally acceptable and available food can best meet the nutritional needs of vulnerable groups. It is therefore necessary to analyse the food value of such food-stuff which are locally available and popularise such nutritious food as to provide a balance diet to them.

The Kutia-Kondas and Pauri Bhuiyias have a strong habit of drinking alcoholic beverages. Before any attempt is made to stop this habit, it is necessary to analyse all types of alcoholic beverages chemically and find out if they contain any nutrients, minerals and vitamins. Any proposal for stopping the habit of drinking should include suggestion of substitute which will supply the same nutrients.

The nature and value of traditional medicinal systems particularly the herbal medicines should

be studied, understood and analysed in order to assess their scientific worth and efficiency. The less recognised, but nevertheless more important health problems lie in the vulnerable areas of malnutrition, particularly among women and children, and a wide range of communicable and other diseases that result from unsanitary environment and poor drinking water facilities. This combination of health problems of the primitive tribes would definitely point to the inadequacy of a purely curative approach of health care and increases the importance of community education for health care. The most significant causes of illness like malnutrition poor water supply and environmental sanitation were not perceived by the people and hence totally ignored. In the constant struggle for daily survival health was a low priority. Their chief concern was with problems of acute illness, childbirth and trauma which interfered with their work. Even major chronic illness like Tuberculosis were ignored till they reached a stage of gross debility. It is therefore necessary that proper health education should be imparted to the people so that they understand the problems in scientific perspective and adopt remedial measure to improve their health.

Many enteric ailments can be eliminated by drinking water from protected sources. It is necessary to dig wells in the village and make the water free from contamination and persuade the people to use water from this source for drinking.

The Kutia-Kondha and Pauri Bhuiyias believe in their traditional medicinal system because it fits in with their culture and their way of thinking. If they believe in wrath of Gods, evil spirits and magic, it must be remembered that it pervades their whole life and does not apply to their view of medicine only. These tribes are mostly not exposed to new ideas and techniques which evolved among civilizations over the centuries, continue living in an insular present. Nor have they changed their beliefs and customs. Thus they believe in their taboos, totems and superstitions and these beliefs shape their thoughts, ideas and practices in their daily activities. Moreover the study of tribal culture indicates that public health is an integral part of the social process in which wants, being and functions, his body and mind, activity, emotions and social relations are intertwined into an organic whole. Therefore any imbalance in the unity of functions of this whole or any part thereof may result in illness in any of the parts

of the configuration. Against a background of such beliefs in supernaturalism as one of the strong causes of illness it is very difficult to accord appreciation and acceptance by the Kutia-Kondha and Pauri Bhuiyias of the modern health and hygienic measures.

However things are changing in both the Kutia-Kondha and Pauri Bhuiya community with considerable rapidity. Though their faith on the medicine-man has changed least these tribes have shown an inclination towards modern medical practices. During our field work it was apparent that they were becoming favourably oriented towards modern medical practices. For example, they wanted to be examined with the help of the stethoscope, get their blood pressure checked up and also wanted their blood to be taken and examined under the microscope.

There is complete vacuum in the tribal areas so far as medical service and care are concerned. But mere provision of Government dispensaries, hospitals and Primary Health Centres would not solve the problem because most of the medical institutions existing in these two tribal areas are underutilized due to various reasons. The tribes complain that whenever they have gone to any Health Centre located in their area they find no one there to provide them with medical aid needed by them because most of the time the doctor and their medical staff are absent.

A subtle qualitative dimension is the unwillingness of the city trained doctors to serve in the interior tribal areas and at the same time the unwillingness of tribal folk to use the existing P. H. C. Therefore a doctor should try to understand cultural and intellectual level of the tribal folk with whom he has to work and should develop respect for cultural differences. The most common complaint of our doctors in the Primary Health Centre or dispensaries in tribal areas is that the tribal patient does not come to them but he goes to their own healers i. e. the magic man, 'Gunies', 'Raulies' Shamans etc. and whenever he comes to them it is too late to do anything for him, yet, the tribal patient will continue to do so unless our doctors and paramedical personnel have a good knowledge about the tribal life, their culture and traditions, customs and practices and unless they understand or at least try to understand various constraints such as his mental attitude and make up, deep rooted cultural belief,

poverty, communication barrier, geographical isolation, etc. which prevent him to take the advantage of existing health services.

Any plan to provide health care to these tribal communities has to reckon with a few basic realities of the tribal life. Prominent among these are extreme poverty, vast illiteracy, geographical isolation, communication barrier, an exaggeratedly high infant and child mortality, the wide prevalence of malnutrition, high incidence of anaemia, heavy load of communicable diseases, the wide range of preventable diseases to which they usually succumb, special genetic disorders, their food habit, their mental makeup, traditional and culturally rooted belief on etiology, pathogenesis and cure of diseases, existence of and belief in traditional healers such as the witch doctors, 'Raulias,' sorcerers, etc. Therefore no sound health programme can afford to ignore these cultural factors.

A holistic programme should be evolved, wherein the health demands should be integrated with other psycho-social needs of the primitive tribal communities. This bundle model with multidimensional interacting components will be more acceptable to these people because some of the felt-needs with benefits known

to them will facilitate adherence to the programme. The goal of the health programmes should not merely be to deliver health services but to promote social change in local health culture in order to establish, through participation, utilization, learning and diffusion a positive health behaviour for improvement and maintenance of health.

It is therefore time to seriously look into the possibilities of microlevel planning for health in tribal areas of Orissa. The present highly centralized planning for health cannot take into consideration the realities of the main health hazard, the actual health need of the tribal communities, social barriers, hierarchy and political forces which can often render the most efficient plan unworkable at the village level. It is therefore essential and important to evolve a system of microlevel planning for health and nutrition for the primitive tribes of Orissa; the objectives may be similar but the methodology must by necessity be different for different tribal communities. Therefore an integrated and inter-disciplinary approach to evolve suitable health programmes for different tribal groups is most desirable and it should constitute an integral part of developmental programme of the primitive tribal communities of Orissa.

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THE STATEMENT ABOUT OWNERSHIP AND PARTICULARS ABOUT
THE NEWSPAPER ENTITLED ADIBASI AS REQUIRED TO BE PUBLISHED
UNDER RULE 8 OF THE REGISTRATION OF NEWSPAPER (CENTRAL)
RULE, 1956

FORM IV

Place of publication	.. Tribal & Harijan Research-cum-Training Institute Bhubaneswar-14, district Puri.
Periodicity of its publications	.. Quarterly
Printer's Name	.. Director, Printing, Stationery and Publication, Orissa, Cuttack.
Nationality	.. Indian
Address	.. Medhupatna, Cuttack-10
Publisher's Name	.. Director of Tribal & Harijan Research-cum- Training Institute, Government of Orissa.
Nationality	.. Indian
Address	.. Bhubaneswar-14
Editors' Name	.. Shri R. K. Mishra, I. A. S. Commissioner-cum-Secretary to Government, Harijan & Tribal Welfare Department, Government of Orissa.
	Dr. N. Patnaik, Director, Tribal & Harijan Research-cum- Training Institute, Bhubaneswar.
Nationality	.. Indian
Address	.. Bhubaneswar, Orissa (India), Pin-751014